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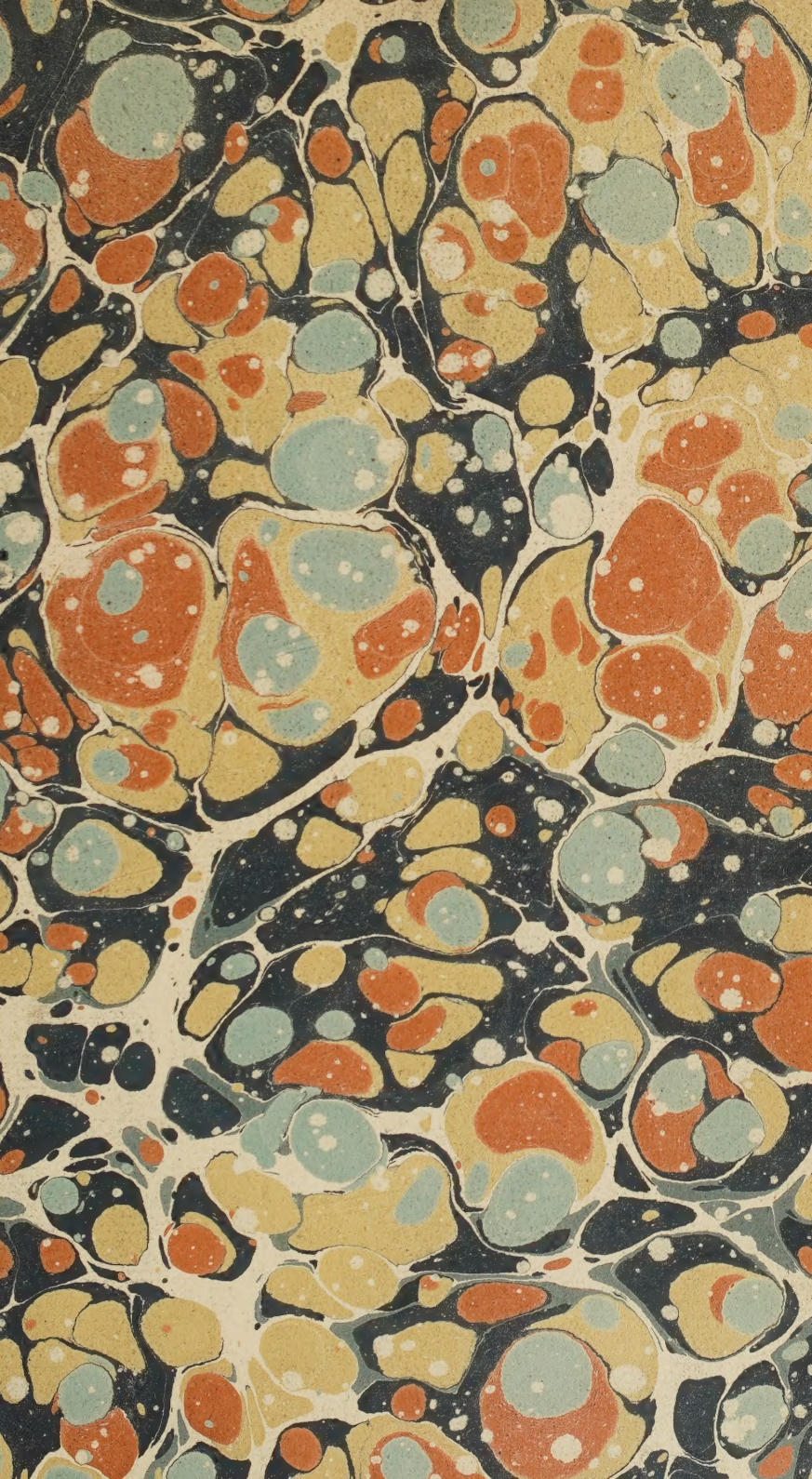

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THE MONKS OF THE WEST

THE

MONKS OF THE WEST

FROM ST BENEDICT TO ST BERNARD

BY

THE COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT

MEMBER OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY

FIDE ET VERITATE

AUTHORISED TRANSLATION

VOL. III.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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ERRATA.

On page 41, first line of note, *for* "quidem," *read* "quidam."
,, 238, ninth line from foot, *for* "orandum," *read* "arandum."
,, 241, second line of note, *for* "cum," *read* "eum."
,, 280, fourth line from foot, *for* "jure pari," *read* "jurisdictioni."
,, 288, twenty-sixth line, *for* "eighth," *read* "ninth."
,, 289, third line of note, *for* "Drontherin," *read* "Drontheim."
,, 379, second line of note, *delete* "and Schrœdl."

CHAPTER I.

GREAT BRITAIN BEFORE THE CONVERSION OF THE SAXONS.

Character of the English nation.—Heir of the Romans, it borrows from them only their grandeur and their pride.—From whence comes its religion? From popes and monks.—England has been made by monks, as France by bishops.—The heroes who resisted the Empire: Caractacus, Boadicea, Galgacus.—No trace of Roman law exists in Britain; all is Celtic or Teutonic.—Britain the first of the Western nations which could live without Rome, and the first which could resist the barbarians.—Ravages of the Picts.—Gildas.—Arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in Britain.—Their destruction of primitive Christianity.—Origin of British Christianity.—The proto-martyr St Alban.—Ravages of the Saxons.—Liberal aid given by the Papacy.—Mission of Palladius, and afterwards of St Germain of Auxerre.—Battle of the Hallelujah.—The Briton Ninian becomes the apostle of the Southern Picts.—His establishment at Whitehorn.—Ferocity of the Caledonians.—His death.—Glastonbury: legend of Joseph of Arimathea: tomb of King Arthur.—Position of Britain between the years 450 and 550.—The four different races: the Picts, the Scots, the Britons, and the Saxons.—From whence did the light of the Gospel come to the Saxons?

In modern Europe, at a distance of seven leagues from France, within sight of our northern shores, there exists a nation whose empire is more vast than that of Alexander or the Cæsars, and which is at once the freest and most powerful, the richest and most manful, the boldest and best regu-

lated in the world. No other nation offers so instructive a study, so original an aspect, or contrasts so remarkable. At once liberal and intolerant, pious and inhuman, loving order and serenity as much as noise and commotion, it unites a superstitious respect for the letter of the law with the most unlimited practice of individual freedom. Busied more than any other in all the arts of peace, yet nevertheless invincible in war, and sometimes rushing into it with frantic passion—too often destitute of enthusiasm, but incapable of failure—it ignores the very idea of discouragement or effeminacy. Sometimes it measures its profits and caprices as by the yard, sometimes it takes fire for a disinterested idea or passion. More changeable than any in its affections and judgments, but almost always capable of restraining and stopping itself in time, it is endowed at once with an originating power which falters at nothing, and with a perseverance which nothing can overthrow. Greedy of conquests and discoveries, it rushes to the extremities of the earth, yet returns more enamoured than ever of the domestic hearth, more jealous of securing its dignity and everlasting duration. The implacable enemy of bondage, it is the voluntary slave of tradition, of discipline freely accepted, or of a prejudice transmitted from its fathers. No nation has been more frequently conquered; none has succeeded better in absorbing and transforming its conquerors. In no other country has Catholicism

been persecuted with more sanguinary zeal; at the present moment none seems more hostile to the Church, and at the same time none has greater need of her care; no other influence has been so greatly wanting to its progress; nothing has left within its breast a void so irreparable; and nowhere has a more generous hospitality been lavished upon our bishops and priests and religious exiles. Inaccessible to modern storms, this island has been an inviolable asylum for our exiled fathers and princes, not less than for our most violent enemies.

The sometimes savage egotism of these islanders, and their too often cynical indifference to the sufferings and bondage of others, ought not to make us forget that there, more than anywhere else, man belongs to himself and governs himself. It is there that the nobility of our nature has developed all its splendour and attained its highest level. It is there that the generous passion of independence, united to the genius of association and the constant practice of self-government, have produced those miracles of fierce energy, of dauntless vigour, and obstinate heroism, which have triumphed over seas and climates, time and distance, nature and tyranny, exciting the perpetual envy of all nations, and among the English themselves a proud enthusiasm.[1]

[1] This enthusiasm has never been better expressed than in those lines which Johnson, the great English moralist of last century, repeated with animation on his return from his visit to the monastic island of Iona, the cradle of British Christianity, whither we are shortly to conduct our readers:

"Stern o'er each bosom Reason holds her state,
With daring aims irregularly great;

Loving freedom for itself, and loving nothing without freedom, this nation owes nothing to her kings, who have been of importance only by her and for her. Upon herself alone weighs the formidable responsibility of her history. After enduring, as much or more than any European nation, the horrors of political and religious despotism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, she has been the first and the only one among them to free herself from oppression for ever. Re-established in her ancient rights, her proud and steadfast nature has forbidden her since then to give up into any hands whatsoever, her rights and destinies, her interests and free will. She is able to decide and act for herself, governing, elevating, and inspiring her great men, instead of being seduced or led astray by them, or worked upon for their advantage. This English race has inherited the pride as well as the grandeur of that Roman people of which it is the rival and the heir; I mean the true Romans of the Republic, not the base Romans subjugated by Augustus. Like the Romans towards their tributaries, it has shown itself ferocious and rapacious to Ireland, inflicting upon its victim, even up to recent times, that bondage and degradation

> Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
> I see the lords of human kind pass by;
> Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
> By forms unfashioned, fresh from nature's hand,
> Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,
> True to imagined right, above control;
> While even the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
> And learns to venerate himself as man."
>
> GOLDSMITH, *The Traveller.*

which it repudiates with horror for itself. Like ancient Rome, often hated, and too often worthy of hate, it inspires its most favourable judges rather with admiration than with love. But, happier than Rome, after a thousand years and more, it is still young and fruitful. A slow, obscure, but uninterrupted progress has created for England an inexhaustible reservoir of strength and life. In her veins the sap swells high to-day, and will swell to-morrow. Happier than Rome, in spite of a thousand false conclusions, a thousand excesses, a thousand stains, she is of all the modern races, and of all Christian nations, the one which has best preserved the three fundamental bases of every society which is worthy of man—the spirit of freedom, the domestic character, and the religious mind.

How, then, has this nation, in which a perfectly pagan pride survives and triumphs, and which has nevertheless remained, even in the bosom of error, the most religious[1] of all European nations, become Christian? How and by what means has Christianity struck root so indestructibly in her soil? This is surely a question of radical interest among all the great questions of history, and one which takes new importance and interest when it is considered that upon the conversion of England there

[1] This may be considered a surprising statement. It expresses, however, a conviction founded upon personal comparisons and studies made during nearly forty years in all the countries of Europe except Russia. It agrees, besides, with the results ascertained by one of the most conscientious and clear-sighted observers of our time, M. Le Play.

has depended, and still depends, the conversion of so many millions of souls. English Christianity has been the cradle of Christianity in Germany; from the depths of Germany, missionaries formed by the Anglo-Saxons have carried the faith into Scandinavia and among the Slaves; and even at the present time, either by the fruitful expansion of Irish orthodoxy, or by the obstinate zeal of the Protestant propaganda, Christian societies, which speak English and live like Englishmen, come into being every day throughout North America, in the two Indies, in immense Australia, and in the Isles of the Pacific. The Christianity of nearly half of the world flows, or will flow, from the fountain which first burst forth upon British soil.

It is possible to answer this fundamental question with the closest precision. No country in the world has received the Christian faith more directly from the Church of Rome, or more exclusively by the ministration of monks.

If France has been made by bishops, as has been said by a great enemy of Jesus Christ, it is still more true that Christian England has been made by monks. Of all the countries of Europe it is this that has been the most deeply furrowed by the monastic plough. The monks, and the monks alone, have introduced, sowed, and cultivated Christian civilisation in this famous island.

From whence came these monks? From two very distinct sources — from Rome and Ireland.

British Christianity was produced by the rivalry, and sometimes by the conflict, of the monastic missionaries of the Roman and of the Celtic Church.

But before its final conversion, which was due, above all, to a Pope and to monks produced by the Benedictine order, Great Britain possessed a primitive Christianity, obscure yet incontestable, the career and downfall of which are worthy of a rapid survey.

Heroic resistance of Britain to the Roman Empire.

Of all the nations conquered by Rome, the Britons were those who resisted her arms the longest, and borrowed the least from her laws and manners. Vanquished for a moment, but not subdued, by the invincible Cæsar, they forced the executioner of the Gauls, and the destroyer of Roman freedom, to leave their shores, without having established slavery there. Less happy under his unworthy successors, reduced to a province, and given up as a prey to avarice and luxury, to the ferocity of usurers,[1] of procurators, and of imperial lieutenants, they long maintained a proud and noble attitude, which contrasted with the universal bondage. *Jam domiti ut pareant, nondum ut serviant.*[2] To be subjects and not to be slaves—it is the first and the last word of British history.

Even under Nero, the Britons laughed at the vile freedmen whom the Cæsars imposed upon the

[1] Such as Seneca himself, according to Dion Cassius.

[2] Tacitus, *Agricola*, c. 13.

dishonoured universe as administrators and magistrates.[1] Long before it was beaten down and revivified by the successive invasions of three Teutonic races—the Saxons, Danes, and Normans—the noble Celtic race had produced a succession of remarkable personages who, thanks to Tacitus, shine with an imperishable light amidst the degradation of the world: the glorious prisoner Caractacus, the British Vercingetorix, who spoke to the emperor in language worthy of the finest days of the Republic—"Because it is your will to enslave us, does it follow that all the world desires your yoke?"[2] and Boadicea, the heroic queen, exhibiting her scourged body and her outraged daughters to excite the indignant patriotism of the Britons, betrayed by fortune but saved by history; and, last of all, Galgacus, whose name Tacitus has made immortal, by investing him with all the eloquence which conscience and justice could bestow upon an honest and indignant man, in that speech which we all know by heart, and which sounded the onset for that fight in which the most distant descendants of Celtic liberty were to cement with their blood the insurmountable rampart of their mountain independence.[3]

It was thus that Britain gave a prelude to the

[1] "Hostibus irrisui fuit, apud quos flagrante etiam tum libertate, nondum cognita libertorum potentia erat: mirabanturque, quod dux, et exercitus tanti belli confector, servitiis obedirent."—*Annal.*, xiv. 39.

[2] "Num, si vos omnibus imperitare vultis, sequitur ut omnes servitutem accipiant?"—*Ibid.*, xii. 37.

[3] "Initium libertatis totius Britanniæ. . . . Nos terrarum ac libertatis extremos."

glorious future which freedom has created for herself, through so many tempests and eclipses, in the island which has finally become her sanctuary and indestructible shelter.

The civil code of Rome, which weighs heavily still, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, upon France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, reigned without doubt in Britain during the period of Roman occupation: but it disappeared with the reign of the Cæsars. Its unwholesome roots never wound around, stifled, or poisoned the vigorous shoots of civil, political, and domestic freedom. The same thing may be said of all other similar influences. Neither in the institutions nor in the monuments of Britain has imperial Rome left any trace of her hideous domination. Its language and its habits have escaped her influence as well as its laws. There, all that is not Celtic is Teutonic. It was reserved for Catholic Rome, the Rome of the Popes, to leave an ineffaceable impression upon this famous island, and there to reclaim, for the immortal majesty of the Gospel, that social influence which everywhere else has been disputed or diverted from it by the fatal inheritance which the Rome of the Cæsars left to the world.

At the same time, after having been the last of the Western nations to yield to the Roman yoke, Britain was the first to free herself from it; she was the first capable of throwing off the imperial authority, and showing the world that it was possible to do

Britain the first of Western nations which dispensed with Cæsar.

without an emperor. When the powerlessness of the Empire against barbaric incursions had been demonstrated in Britain as elsewhere, the Britons were not false to themselves. The little national monarchies, the clans aristocratically organised, whose divisions had occasioned the triumph of the Roman invasion, reappeared under native chiefs. A kind of federation was constituted, and its leaders signified to the Emperor Honorius, in 410, by an embassy received at Ravenna, that henceforward Britain reckoned upon defending and governing herself.[1] A great writer has already remarked, that of all the nations subdued by the Roman Empire it is the Britons alone whose struggle with the barbarians had a history—and the history of that resistance lasted two centuries. Nothing similar occurred at the same period, under the same circumstances, among the Italians, the Gauls, or the Spaniards, who all allowed themselves to be crushed and overthrown without resistance.[2]

At the same time, Britain herself had not passed with impunity through three centuries and a half of imperial bondage. As in Gaul, as in all the countries subjugated by the Roman Empire, de-

[1] "Romanum nomen tenens, legem abjiciens."—GILDAS, *De Excidio Britanniæ*. ZOSIME, *Hist. Novæ*, book vi. pp. 376, 381. Compare LINGARD, *History of England*, c. 1. AMÉDÉE THIERRY, *Arles et le Tyran Constantin*, p. 309.

[2] GUIZOT, *Essai sur l'Histoire de France*, p. 2. In Gaul only the Arvernes, the compatriots of Vercingetorix, had one noble inspiration, when Ecdicius compelled the Goths to raise the siege of Clermont in 471, but it was but a passing gleam in the night.

pendence and corruption had ended by enervating, softening, and ruining the vigorous population. The sons of those whom Cæsar could not conquer, and who had struggled heroically under Claudius and Nero, soon began to think themselves incapable of making head against the barbarians, *amissa virtute pariter ac libertate*. They sought in vain the intervention of the Roman legions, which returned to the island on two different occasions, without succeeding in delivering or protecting it. At the same time, the barbarians who 418-424.
came to shake and overthrow the sway of the Cæsars in Britain were not foreigners, as were the Goths in Italy and the Franks in Gaul. Those Caledonians who, under Galgacus, victori- Ravages of the Picts.
ously resisted Agricola, and who, under the new names of Scots and Picts, breached the famous ramparts erected against them by Antoninus and Severus, and resumed year after year their sanguinary devastations, wringing from Britain, overwhelmed and desolated by half a century of ravage, 446.
that cry of distress which is known to all—"The barbarians have driven us to the sea, the sea drives us back upon the barbarians. We have only the choice of being murdered or drowned;"[1] were nothing more than unsubdued tribes belonging to Britain herself.

[1] "*Aetio ter consuli gemitus Britannorum.* Repellunt nos barbari ad mare, repellit mare ad barbaros. Inter hæc oriuntur duo genera funerum: aut jugulamur aut mergimur."

Arrival of the Anglo-Saxons.

Everybody knows also how imprudently the Britons accepted the assistance against the Picts, of the warlike and maritime race of Anglo-Saxons, and how, themselves not less cruel nor less formidable than the Picts, those allies, becoming the conquerors of the country, founded there a new power, or, to speak more justly, a new nationality, which has victoriously maintained its existence through all subsequent conquests and revolutions. These warriors were an offshoot from the great Germanic family—as were also, according to general opinion, the Britons themselves—and resembled the latter closely in their institutions and habits; which did not, however, prevent the native population from maintaining against them, during nearly two centuries, a heroic, although in the end useless, resistance.[1] The Anglo-Saxons, who were entirely strangers to Roman civilisation, took no pains to preserve or re-establish the remains of the imperial rule. But in destroying the dawning independence of the Britons, in driving back into the hilly regions of the west that part of the population which was beyond the reach of the long knives from which they derived their name,[2] the pagan invaders overthrew, and for a time annihilated, upon the blood-stained soil of Great Britain, an edifice of a majesty very different from that of the Roman Empire, and of

[1] This resistance has been nowhere so well described as by M. Arthur de la Borderie in the *Revue Bretonne* of 1864.

[2] *Sax*, knife, sword, in old German.

endurance more steadfast than that of Celtic nationality—the edifice of the Christian religion.

Origin of Christianity in Britain.

It is known with certainty that Christianity existed in Britain from the second century of the Christian era, but nothing is positively known as to the origin or organisation of the primitive church; according to Tertullian, however, she had penetrated into Caledonia beyond the limits of the Roman province.[1] She furnished her contingent of martyrs to the persecution of Diocletian, in the foremost rank among whom stood Alban, a young deacon, whose tomb, at a later date, was consecrated by one of the principal Anglo-Saxon monasteries. She appeared, immediately after the peace of the Church, in the persons of her bishops, at the first Western councils. And she survived the Roman 314. domination, but only to fight for her footing inch by inch, and finally to fall back, with the last tribes of the Britons, before the Saxon invaders, after an entire century of efforts and sufferings, of massacres and profanations. During all this period, from one end of the isle to the other, the Saxons carried fire and sword and sacrilege, pulling down public buildings and private dwellings, devastating the churches, breaking the sacred stones of the altars, and murdering the pastors along with their flocks.[2]

1 "Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo vero subdita."—Tertul., *Adv. Judæos*, c. 7.

2 "Accensus manibus paganorum ignis . . . ab orientali mare usque ad occidentale . . . totam prope insulæ pereuntis superficiem obtexit. Ruebant ædificia publica, simul et privata; passim sacerdotes inter

Trials so cruel and prolonged necessarily disturbed the habitual communication between the Christians of Britain and the Roman Church; and this absence of intercourse occasioned in its turn the diversities of rites and usages, especially in respect to the celebration of Easter, which will be discussed further on. At present it is enough to state that the most attentive study of authentic documents reveals no doctrinal strife, no diversity of belief, between the British bishops and the Bishop of bishops at Rome. Besides, the Rome of the Popes was lavishing its lights and consolations upon its daughter beyond sea, at the very moment when the Rome of the Cæsars abandoned her to disasters which could never be repaired.

The British Church had become acquainted with the dangerous agitations of heresy even before she was condemned to her mortal struggle against Germanic paganism. Pelagius, the great heresiarch of the fifth century, the great enemy of grace, was

altaria trucidabantur, præsules cum populis, sine ullo respectu honoris, ferro pariter et flammis absumebantur."—Beda, *Hist. Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, book i. c. 15. Compare Gildas, *De Excidio Britanniæ*. Opinions are divided as to the complete or partial destruction of the Britons in the districts conquered by the Saxons. Palgrave especially has questioned ordinary tradition upon this fact. However, the Saxon historians themselves have proved more than one case of complete extermination. The first Saxons established by Cerdic, founder of the kingdom of Wessex, in the Isle of Wight, destroyed the entire native population there. "Paucos Britones, ejusdem insulæ accolas, quos in ea invenire potuerunt . . . . occiderunt: cæteri enim accolæ ejusdem insulæ ante aut occisi erant, aut exules aufugerant."—Asser, p. 5, ap. Lingard, i. 19. "Hoc anno (490) Ælla et Cissa obsederunt Andredescester (in Sussex) et interfecerunt omnes qui id incolerent, adeo ut ne unus Brito ibi superstes fuerit."—*Chron. Anglo-Sax.*, ad ann. 490, ed. Gibson.

born in her bosom. To defend herself from the contagion of his doctrines, she called to her aid the orthodox bishops of Gaul. Pope Celestin, who, about the same period, had sent the Roman deacon Palladius to be the first bishop of the Scots of Ireland, or of the Hebrides,[1] warned by the same Palladius of the great dangers which threatened the faith in Britain, charged our great bishop of Auxerre, St Germain, to go and combat there the Pelagian heresy. This prelate paid two visits to Britain, fortifying her in the orthodox faith and the love of celestial grace. Germain, who was accompanied the first time by the bishop of Troyes,[2] and the second by the bishop of Treves, employed at first against the heretics only the arms of persuasion. He preached to the faithful not only in the churches,

Mission of the deacon Palladius to the Scots, 424 or 431;

and of the Bishop St Germain of Auxerre against the Pelagians.

[1] "Palladius ad Scotos in Christum credentes ordinatus a papa Celestino primus episcopus mittitur."—PROSPER, *Chron. Consulare*, ad ann. 429. In another work this contemporary adds: "Et ordinato Scotis episcopo, dum Romanam insulam studet servare catholicam, fecit etiam barbaram Christianam."—*Lib. contra Collat.*, c. 14. But the small success of that mission, of which there is no mention even in the historic documents of Ireland, gives probability to the conjecture of M. Varin, who concludes that Palladius was charged solely with the care of the Scots already established in the Hebrides, and upon the western shores of Caledonia. This is the best place to mention a saint, venerated in the Church of Scotland as the disciple of Palladius, St Ternan, described as archbishop of the Picts in the liturgical books of Aberdeen, which have made of St Palladius († towards 450) a contemporary of St Gregory the Great († 604). The memory of this saint has been brought again to light by the recent publication of a very curious liturgical relic, *Liber Ecclesie Beati Terrenani de Arbuthnott, seu Missale secundum usum Ecclesiæ Sancti Andrea in Scotia*, which we owe to Dr Forbes, Anglican bishop of Brechin. But the article devoted to him by the Bollandists (*Act. SS.*, Junii, vol. ii. p. 533-35) does not put an end to the uncertainty which prevails as to his existence.

[2] St Lupus, educated at the monastic school of Lerins, and so well known for his moral victory over Attila.—See *ante*, vol. i. p. 470.

but at cross-roads and in the fields. He argued publicly against the Pelagian doctors in presence of the entire population, assembled with their wives and children, who gave him the most absorbed attention.[1] The illustrious bishop, who had been a soldier in his youth, showed once more the bold ardour of his early profession in defence of the people whom he came to evangelise. At the head of his disarmed converts he marched against a horde of Saxons and Picts, who were leagued together against the Britons, and put them to flight by making his band repeat three times the cry *Hallelujah*, which the neighbouring mountains threw back in echoes. This is the day known as the *Victory of the Hallelujah*.[2] It would have been well could he have preserved the victors from the steel of the barbarians as he succeeded in curing them of the poison of heresy; for after his visit Pelagianism appeared in Britain only to receive its deathblow at the synod of 519. By means of the disciples whom he trained, and who became the founders of the principal monasteries of Wales, it is to our great Gallican saint that Britain owes her first splendours of cenobitical life.

The celebrated bishop of Auxerre and his brethren

[1] "Divinus per eos sermo ferme quotidie, non solum in ecclesiis, verum etiam per trivia, per rura prædicabatur. . . . Immensa multitudo etiam cum conjugibus et liberis excita convenerat, et erat populus expectator et futurus judex . . . vix manus continet, judicium tamen clamore testatur."—Bede, i. 18.

[2] "Pugna alleluiatica."

were not the only dignified ecclesiastics to whom the Roman Church committed the care of preserving and propagating the faith in Britain. Towards the end of the fourth century, at the height of the Caledonian invasions, the son of a Breton chief, Ninias or Ninian, went to Rome to refresh his spirit in the fountains of orthodoxy and discipline, and, after having lived, prayed, and studied there in the school of Jerome and Damasus,[1] he received from Pope Siricius episcopal ordination. He conceived the bold thought, in returning to Britain, of meeting the waves of northern barbarians, who continued to approach ever nearer and more terrible, by the only bulwark which could subdue, by transforming them. He undertook to convert them to the Christian faith. The first thing he did was to establish the seat of his diocese in a distant corner of that midland district which lies between the two isthmuses that divide Great Britain into three unequal parts. This region, the possession of which had been incessantly disputed by the Picts, the Britons, and the Romans, had been reduced into a province, under the name of *Valentia*, only in the time of the Emperor Valentinianus, and comprehended all the land between the wall of Antoninus on the north, and the wall of Severus to the south. Its western extremity, the part of the

The Breton Ninian undertakes the conversion of the Picts.

370-394.

[1] "Nynia episcopo reverentissimo et sanctissimo viro, de natione Britonum, qui erat Romæ regulariter fidem et mysteria veritatis edoctus."—BEDE, iii. 4.

British coast which lay nearest to Ireland, bore at that time the name of Galwidia or Galloway.[1] It forms a sort of peninsula, cut by the sea into several vast and broad promontories. It was on the banks of one of the bays thus formed, upon a headland from which the distant heights of Cumberland and the Isle of Man may be distinguished, that Ninian established his ecclesiastical headquarters by building a stone church. This kind of edifice, till then unknown in Britain, gained for the new cathedral and its adjoining monastery the name of *Candida Casa*, or Whitehorn,[2] which is still its title. He consecrated the church to St Martin, the illustrious apostle of the Gauls, to visit whom he had stopped at Tours, on his way back from Rome, and who, according to tradition, gave him masons capable of building a church in the Roman manner. The image of this holy man, who died at about the same time as Ninian established himself in his White House, the recollection of his courage, his

[1] This province, so called during all the middle ages, is represented in modern maps by the counties of Wigton and Kirkcudbright.

[2] *Horn*, *hern*, Saxon *ærn*, house. On an island near the shore there is still shown a little ruined church which is said to have been built by St Ninian. The diocese which he founded disappeared after his death; but it was re-established by the Anglo-Saxons, as was also the community, to whom the famous Alcuin addressed a letter, entitled *Ad fratres S. Ninian in Candida Casa*. A new invasion of the Picts, this time from Ireland, destroyed for the second time the diocese of Galloway, which was re-established only in the twelfth century, under King David I. The beautiful ruins of this cathedral, which is comparatively modern, and was destroyed by the Presbyterians, are seen in the town of Whitehorn. The tomb of St Ninian was always much frequented as a place of pilgrimage before the Reformation.

laborious efforts against idolatry and heresy, his charity, full of generous indignation against all persecutors,[1] were well worthy to preside over the apostolic career of the new British bishop, and to inspire him with the self-devotion necessary for beginning the conversion of the Picts.

What traveller ever dreams in our days, while surveying western Scotland from the banks of the Solway to those of the Forth and Tay, passing from the gigantic capitals of industry to the fields fertilised by all the modern improvements of agriculture, meeting everywhere the proofs and productions of the most elaborate civilisation,—who dreams nowadays of the obstacles which had to be surmounted before this very country could be snatched from barbarism! It is but too easy to forget what its state must have been when Ninian became its first missionary and bishop. Notwithstanding many authors, both sacred and profane — Dion and Strabonius, St John Chrysostom and St Jerome—have emulated each other in painting the horrible cruelty, the savage and brutal habits, of those inhabitants of North Britain, who, successively known under the name of Caledonians, *Meatæ*, *Attacoti*,[2] Scots, or Picts, were most probably nothing more than the descendants of the British tribes whom Rome

Ferocity of the tribes evangelised by Ninian.

[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 453.

[2] These *Attacoti*, to whom St Jerome attributes morals and cruelties which will not bear description, inhabited, according to the general opinion, the picturesque district north of the Clyde, at present traversed by so many travellers, between Loch Lomond and Loch Fyne.

had not been able to subdue.[1] All agree in denouncing the incestuous intercourse of their domestic existence, and they have even been accused of cannibalism.[2] All express the horror with which the subjects of the Empire regarded those monsters in human form, who owed their final name of Picts to their habit of marching to battle naked, disclosing bodies tattooed, like those of the savage islanders of the Pacific, with strange devices and many colours. Notwithstanding, Ninian did not hesitate to trust himself in the midst of those enemies of faith and civilisation. He, the son and representative of that British race which they had been accustomed for more than a century to massacre, spoil, and scorn, spent the twenty years that remained of his life in unwearied efforts to bring them into the light from on high, to lead them back from cannibalism to Christianity, and that at the very moment when the Roman Empire, as represented by Honorius, had abandoned Britain to its implacable destroyers.

Unfortunately there remain no authentic details of his mission,[3] no incident which recalls even distantly the clearly-characterised mission of his suc-

[1] Palgrave, *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. p. 419. This is true, however, only of the Picts, for the Scots unquestionably came from Ireland, the Scotia of the middle ages.

[2] See specially St Jerome, *in Jovinianum*, book ii.

[3] The Bollandists (*die* 16th September) do not admit the authenticity of the life of St Ninian, written in the twelfth century by the holy abbot Ælred, which contains only such miracles as are to be found everywhere, without any specially characteristic feature.

cessor, St Columba, who became, a century and a half later, the apostle of the Northern Picts. We only know that he succeeded in founding, in the midst of the Pictish race, a nucleus of Christianity which was never altogether destroyed; after which, crossing the limits which Agricola and Antoninus had set to the Roman sway at the time of its greatest splendour, he went, preaching the faith to the foot of those Grampians where the father-in-law of Tacitus gained his last unfruitful victory.[1] We know that his memory remains as a blessing among the descendants of the Picts and Scots, and that many churches consecrated under his invocation still preserve the recollection of that worship which was vowed to him by a grateful posterity;[2] and, finally, we know that, when above seventy, he returned to die in his monastery of the White House, after having passed the latter portion of his life, preparing himself for the judgment of God, in a cave still pointed out half-way up a white and lofty cliff on the Galloway shore, upon which beat, without cease, the impetuous waves of the Irish Sea.[3]

562-597.

Death of Ninian, 432.

But in the primitive British Church, which was

[1] "Ipsi australes Picti qui infra eosdem montes habent sedes . . . relicto errore idololatriæ fidem veritatis acceperant prædicanti eis verbum Ninia episcopo."—Bede, iii. 4.

[2] Even beyond the Grampians, as far as the point where Glen Urquhart opens upon Loch Ness, and where St Columba (see further on, Book IX. chap. iii.) went to visit an old Pict when dying, a ruined chapel is still to be seen bearing the name of St Ninian, from which it has been supposed that his mission passed the limit which has been ordinarily assigned to it.

[3] *Lives of the English Saints*, 1845, No. xiii., p. 131.

so cruelly afflicted by the heathens of the north and of the east, by the Picts and the Saxons, there were many other monasteries than that of Ninian at Whitehorn. All the Christian churches of the period were accompanied by cenobitical institutions, and Gildas, the most trustworthy of British annalists, leaves no doubt as to their existence in Britain.[1] But history has retained no detailed recollection of them. Out of Cambria, which will be spoken of hereafter, the only great monastic institution whose name has triumphed over oblivion belongs to legend rather than to history; but it has held too important a place in the religious traditions of the English people to be altogether omitted here. It was an age in which Catholic nations loved to dispute among themselves their priority and antiquity in the profession of the Christian faith, and to seek their direct ancestors among the privileged beings who had known, cherished, and served the Son of God during His passage through this life. They aspired by these legendary genealogies to draw themselves somehow closer to Calvary, and to be represented at the mysteries of the Passion. For this reason Spain has victoriously claimed as her apostle the son of Zebedee, the brother of St John — that James whom Jesus led with Him to the splendours of Tabor and to the anguish of the Garden of Olives. For this reason the south of France glories in tracing back its Christian origin to that family whose

[1] *De Excidio Britanniæ*, p. 43-45.

sorrows and love are inscribed in the Gospel—to Martha, who was the hostess of Jesus; to Lazarus, whom He raised up; to Mary Magdalene, who was the first witness of His own resurrection; to their miraculous journey from Judea to Provence; to the martyrdom of one, to the retreat of another in the Grotto of St Baume;—admirable traditions, which the most solid learning of our own day has justified and consecrated.[1] England in other days, with much less foundation, loved to persuade herself that she owed the first seed of faith to Joseph of Arimathea, the noble and rich disciple[2] who laid the body of the Lord in the sepulchre where the Magdalene came to embalm it. The Britons, and after them the Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Normans, handed down from father to son the tradition that Joseph, flying the persecutions of the Jews, and carrying with him for all his treasure some drops of the blood of Jesus Christ, landed on the western coast of England with twelve companions; that he there found an asylum in a desert place surrounded by water,[3] and that he built and conse-

Legend of Joseph of Arimathea.

Abbey of Glastonbury.

[1] See the great and learned work published by M. Faillon, Director of Saint-Sulpice, under the title of *Monuments inédits sur l'Apostolat de Sainte Marie Madeleine en Provence.* Paris, 1848. Compare Bouche, *Defénse de la Foi de Provence pour ses Saints Lazare, Maximin, Marthe, et Madeleine.*

[2] "Nobilis decurio."—S. Marc.

[3] Guillelmus Malmesburiensis, *Antiq. Glastonb.*, ap. Gale, *Script. Rer. Britann.*, vol. iii. p. 293. Compare Baronius, *Ann.*, ad ann. 48. Dugdale, *Monasticon*, vol. i. p. 2. The Bollandists and various other modern historians have taken much pains to refute this tradition. It is, however, repeated in the letter which some monks addressed to Queen

crated to the blessed Virgin a chapel, the walls of which were formed by entwined branches of willow, and the dedication of which Jesus Christ Himself did not disdain to celebrate. The same legend has been told since then of two great and famous monastic churches—that of St Denis in France, and of Notre Dame des Ermites in Switzerland.[1] This spot, destined to become the first Christian sanctuary of the British Isles, was situated upon a tributary of the gulf into which the Severn falls. It afterwards received the name of Glastonbury; and such was, according to the unchangeable popular conviction, the origin of the great abbey of that name, which was afterwards occupied by monks of

Mary in 1553, to ask the re-establishment of their abbey (ap. DUGDALE, vol. i. p. 9 of the new edition). In consequence of this tradition of Joseph of Arimathea, the ambassadors of England claimed precedence of those of France, Spain, and Scotland at the Councils of Pisa in 1409, of Constance in 1414, and, above all, of Bâle in 1434, because, according to them, the faith had been preached in France only by St Denis, and later than the mission of Joseph of Arimathea.—USSHER, *De Prim. Eccl. Brit.*, p. 22.

[1] The following narrative, told by William of Malmesbury, shows to what extent this legend was accepted in France up to the twelfth century:

"Monachus quidam Glastoniæ, Godefridus nomine (de cujus epistola hoc capitulum assumpsimus), tempore Henrice Blesensis abbatis Glastoniensis, cum in pago Parisiacensi apud Sanctum Dionysium moraretur; senior quidam ex monachis interrogavit eum: 'Quo genus? Unde domo?' Respondit: 'Normannum e Britanniæ monasterio, quod Glastingeia dicetur, monachum.—Papæ! inquit, an adhuc stat illa perpetuæ Virginis et misericordiæ Matris vetusta ecclesia?—Stat,' inquit. Tum ille lepido attactu caput G. Glastoniensis demulcens, diu silentio suspensum tenuit, ac sic demum ora resolvit: 'Hæc gloriosissimi martyris Dionysii ecclesia et illa, de qua te asseris, eamdem privilegii dignitatem habent; ista in Gallia, illa in Britannia, uno eodem tempore exortæ, a summo et magno pontifice consecratæ. Uno tamen gradu illa supereminet: Roma etenim secunda vocatur.'"

Irish origin.[1] This sanctuary of the primitive legends and national traditions of the Celtic race was besides supposed to enclose the tomb of King Arthur, who was, as is well known, the personification of the long and bloody resistance of the Britons to the Saxon invasion, the heroic champion of their liberty, of their language, and of their faith, and the first type of that chivalrous ideal of the middle ages in which warlike virtues were identified with the service of God and of our Lady.[2] Mortally wounded in one of these combats against the Saxons, which lasted three successive days and nights, he was carried to Glastonbury, died there, and was buried in secret, leaving to his nation the vain hope of seeing him one day reappear,[3] and to the whole of Christian Europe a legendary glory, a memory destined to emulate that of Charlemagne.

[1] The curious collection entitled *Monasticon Anglicanum*, with the admirable plates of W. Hollar, which are to be found in the editions of the seventeenth century, should be consulted upon this famous abbey, as also upon all the others we may name. The bones of King Arthur were supposed to have been found at Glastonbury in the reign of Henry II., at the end of the twelfth century.

[2] See all the many poems on the *Round Table* in England, France, and Germany, and especially the three great poems entitled *Parceval*, *Titurel*, and *Lohengrin*, which turn upon the worship of the *Saint Graal* or *Sang Réal*, that is to say, the blood of our Lord, collected by Joseph of Arimathea, and preserved in the vase which Jesus Christ had used in the institution of the Eucharist.

[3] Compare THIERRY, *Hist. de la Conquête d'Angleterre*, book i. p. 39. LAPPENBERG, vol. i. p. 104-107. M. de la Borderie, in his fine narrative of the struggle of the insular Britons with the Anglo-Saxons, has well distinguished the hyperbolical personage of legendary tradition from the real Arthur, chief of the league of Britons of the south and west, and conqueror of the Saxons, or rather of the Angles, in twelve battles.

Thus poetry, history, and faith found a common home in the old monastery, which was for more than a thousand years one of the wonders of England, and which still remained erect, flourishing, and extensive as an entire town, up to the day when Henry VIII. hung and quartered the last abbot before the great portal of the confiscated and profaned sanctuary.[1]

Position of Britain from 450 to 550.

But we return to the reality of history, and to the period which must now occupy our attention, that which extends from the middle of the fifth to that of the sixth century, the same age in which the Merovingians founded in Gaul the Frankish kingdom, so beloved by the monks; and St Benedict planted upon Monte Cassino the cradle of the greatest of monastic orders. Great Britain, destined to become the most precious conquest of the Benedictines, offered at that moment the spectacle of four different races desperately struggling against each other for the mastery.

In the north were the Picts and Scots, still strangers and enemies to the faith of Christ, intrenched behind those mountains and gulfs, which gained for them the character of transmarine foreigners, people from beyond seas;[2] continually

[1] 14th May 1539.—This martyr was accused of having withdrawn from the hand of the spoiler some part of the treasure of the abbey. He was pursued and put to death by the zeal of John Russell, founder of the house of Bedford, and one of the principal instruments of the tyranny of Henry VIII.

[2] Gildas and Bede call them "*gentes transmarinas:* non quod extra Britanniam essent positæ, sed quia a parte Brittonum erant remotæ."

threatening the southern districts, which they had crushed or stupefied for a century by the intermitting recurrence of their *infestations;* and from which they were driven only by other barbarians as heathen and as savage as themselves.

Further down, in that region which the gulfs of Clyde, Forth, and Solway constitute the central peninsula of the three which compose Great Britain, were other Picts permanently established, since 448, in the land which they had torn from the Britons, and among whom the apostle Ninian had sown the seeds of Christianity.[1]

To the south-west, and upon all the coast which faces Ireland, remained a native and still independent population. It was here that the unhappy Britons—abandoned by the Romans, decimated, ravaged, and trodden down for a century by the Picts; then for another century spoiled, enslaved, driven from their towns and fields by the Saxons; then driven back again, some to the mountains of Wales, others to that tongue or horn of land which is called Cornwall, *Cornu walliæ*, others to the maritime district which extends from the banks of the Clyde to those of the Mersey[2]—still found an asylum.

1 "Picti in *extrema parte insulæ*" (that is to say, of the Roman isle, in Valentia), "tunc primum et deinceps requieverunt, prædas et contritiones nonnunquam facientes," &c.—GILDAS, apud GALE, p. 13.

2 This was the kingdom of *Strath-Clyde*, which later took the name of Cambria, and of which a vestige remains, and, at the same time, a population more British than Saxon, in the existing county of Cumberland. The boundaries of this kingdom, however, are much disputed. To find a

Finally, in the south-east, all the country which is now England had fallen a prey to the Anglo-Saxons, who were occupied in laying, under the federative form of the seven or eight kingdoms of the Heptarchy, the immovable foundations of the most powerful nation of the modern world.

But, like the Picts of the north, the Anglo-Saxons were still heathens. From whence shall come to them the light of the Gospel and the bond of Christian civilisation, which are indispensable to their future grandeur and virtue? Shall it be from those mountains of Cambria, from Wales, where the vanquished race maintains the sacred fire of faith and the traditions of the British Church, with its

way through the confusion of texts and traditions relative to the religious and chronological origin of Great Britain, recourse should be had to two admirable papers, by a modern writer, too soon withdrawn from the ranks of French erudition, M. Varin, Dean of the Faculty of Sciences at Rennes, which are to be found in the *Recueil des Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l'Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (tome v., first and second part, 1857, 1858). The first is entitled *Etudes relatives à l'état politique et religieux des Iles Britanniques au moment de l'Invasion Saxonne;* the second, *Mémoire sur les Causes de la Dissidence entre l'Eglise Bretonne et l'Eglise Romaine relativement à la Célébration de la Fête de Pâques.* Before resolving this last question, with a precision and a perspicuity which permit us to follow him without hesitation, M. Varin guides us across all the meanderings of the three principal schools, Irish, English, and Scotch, which dispute the origin of the Caledonians; and which, as personified in *Usher*, *Camden*, and *Innes*, have remained almost unknown to Continental learning.

He regards as proved—1st, The identity of the Picts with the ancient Caledonians. 2d, The Irish theory, which makes out the *Scots* to be a colony of Hibernians, of Irish origin (probably towards 258), and established in Caledonia before the period of the *infestations*.

native clergy and monastic institutions? It is a question impossible to solve, without having thrown a rapid glance over the religious condition of that picturesque and attractive country during the sixth century.

CHAPTER II.

THE SAINTS AND MONKS OF WALES.

The British refugees in Cambria maintain there the genius of the Celtic race. — Testimony rendered to the virtues of the Welsh by their enemy Giraldus. —Music and poetry: the bards and their triads. — Devotion to the Christian faith. — King Arthur crowned by the Bishop Dubricius. —Alliance between the bards and the monks: the bard surprised by the flood. — A few names which float in the ocean of legends. — Mutual influence of Cambria, Armorica, and Ireland upon each other: their legends identical. —The love of the Celtic monks for travel. — Foundation of the episcopal monasteries of St Asaph by Kentigern, of Llandaff by Dubricius, of Bangor by Iltud, a converted bandit. —St David, monk and bishop, the Benedict of Wales. —His pilgrimage to Jerusalem, from which he returns archbishop. —The right of asylum recognised. —He restores Glastonbury. —His tomb becomes the national sanctuary of Cambria. —Legend of St Cadoc and his father and mother. —He founds Llancarvan, the school and burying-place of the Cambrian race. —His poetical aphorisms, his vast domains. —He protects the peasants. —A young girl carried off and restored. —Right of asylum as for St David. — *The Hate of Cadoc.* — He takes refuge in Armorica, prays for Virgil, returns to Britain, and there perishes by the sword of the Saxons. —His name invoked at the battle of the Thirty. —St Winifred and her fountain. —St Beino, the enemy of the Saxons. —The hatred of the Cambrians to the Saxons an obstacle to the conversion of the conquerors.

449-560. DURING the long struggle maintained by the Britons in defence of their lands and their independence with the Saxons, whom a succession of invading expeditions brought like waves

of the sea upon the eastern and southern shores of the island, a certain number of those who repudiated the foreign rule had sought an asylum in the western peninsulas of their native land, and especially in that great peninsular basin which the Latins called Cambria, and which is now called Wales, the land of the Gael. This district seems intended by nature to be the citadel of England. Bathed on three sides by the sea, defended on the fourth by the Severn and other rivers, this quadrilateral, moreover, contains the highest mountains in the southern part of the island, and a crowd of gorges and defiles inaccessible to the military operations of old. After having served as a refuge to the Britons oppressed by the Roman conquest, Cambria resisted the efforts of the Anglo-Saxons for five centuries, and even remained long inaccessible to the Anglo-Normans, whom it took more 1066 1284.
than two hundred years to complete in this region the work of William the Conqueror.

Like Ireland and Scotland, and our own Armorica, this fine country has at all times been the object of lively sympathy, not only among learned Celtomaniacs, but among all men whose hearts are moved by the sight of a race which makes defeat honourable by the tenacity of its resistance to the victor—and still more among all lovers of that inimitable poetry which springs spontaneously from the traditions and instincts of a generous and unfortunate people.

The unquestionable signs of a race entirely distinct from that which inhabits the other parts of England may still be distinguished there;—and there, too, may be found a language evidently the sister language of the three other Celtic dialects which are still in existence—the Breton Armorican, the Irish, and the Gaelic of the Scottish Highlands.

Cambria remains the sanctuary of the Celtic genius.

But it is, above all, in the sudden vicissitudes of the history of Wales, from King Arthur to Llewellyn, and in the institutions which enabled it to resist the foreign invasion for seven centuries, that we recognise the true characteristics and rich nature of the ancient British race. Everywhere else the native population had either been killed, enslaved, or absorbed. But in this spot, where it had sufficient strength to survive and flourish along with the other nationalities of the West, it has displayed all its native worth, bequeathing to us historical, juridical, and poetical remains, which prove the powerful and original vitality with which it was endowed.[1] By its soul, by its tongue, and by its blood, the race has thus protested against the exaggerated statements made by the Briton Gildas, and the Saxon Bede, of the corruption of the victims of the Saxon invasion. In all times there have been found men, and even the best of men, who thus wrong the vanquished, and make history conspire with fortune to absolve and

[1] See the excellent work entitled *Das Alte Wales*, by Ferdinand Walter, Professor at the University of Bonn. 1859.

crown the victors. The turn of the Anglo-Saxons was to come: they also, when the Norman invasion had crushed them, found a crowd of pious detractors to prove that they had merited their fate, and to absolve and mitigate the crimes of the Conquest.

The most striking, and, at the same time, the most attractive, feature in the characteristic history of the Welsh is, without doubt, the ardour of patriotism, the invincible love of liberty and national independence, which they evidenced throughout seven centuries, and which no other race has surpassed. We are specially informed of these qualities, even by the servile chroniclers of their conquerors, by the Anglo-Norman writers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, from whom truth extorts the most unequivocal eulogiums. These writers certainly point out certain vices, and especially certain customs, which are in opposition to the rules of civilised nations, such as that of fighting naked, like the Britons of Cæsar's day, or the Picts of a later date, against adversaries armed from head to foot. But they rival each other in celebrating the heroic and unwearied devotion of the Gael to their country, and to general and individual freedom; their reverence for the achievements and memory of their ancestors; their love of war; their contempt of life; their charity to the poor; their exemplary temperance, which was combined with inexhaustible hospitality; and, above all, their

The enemies of the Gael bear witness to their virtues.

extraordinary valour in fight, and their obstinate constancy through all their reverses and disasters.[1]

Nothing can give a better picture of this people than that decree of their ancient laws which interdicted the seizure by justice, in the house of any Gael whatsoever, of three specified things—his sword, his harp, and one of his books ;[2] the harp and the book, because in time of peace they regarded music and poetry as the best occupation of an honest and free man. Thus from infancy every Gael cultivated these two arts, and especially music, with passionate and unanimous eagerness. It was the favourite form, the gracious accompaniment of hospitality. The traveller was everywhere received by choirs of singers. From morning to evening every house rang with the sound of the harp and other instru-

Their passionate love for music and poetry.

[1] Let us quote the very words of the enemies of Welsh independence; history too seldom gives us an opportunity of hearing and repeating details so noble :—

"Patriæ tutelæ student et libertatis ; pro patria pugnant, pro libertate laborant. . . . Continua pristinæ nobilitatis memoria. . . . Tantæ audaciæ et ferocitatis, ut nudi cum armatis congredi non vereantur, adeo ut sanguinem pro patria fundere promptissime, vitamque velint pro laude pacisci."—GIRALDUS, *Cambriæ Descript.*, c. 8, 10. "In bellico conflictu primo impetu, acrimonia, voce, vultu terribiles tam . . . tubarum prælongarum clangore altisono quam cursu pernici. . . . Gens asperrima . . . hodie confecta et cruentam in fugam turpiter conversa, cras nihilominus expeditionem parat, nec damno nec dedecore retardata."—GIRALD., *De Illaudabilibus Walliæ*, c. 3. "Nec crapulæ dediti nec temulentiæ . . . in equis sola et armis tota versatur intentio. . . . Vespere cœna sobria : et si forte nulla vel minima pars, vesperam alteram patienter expectant. Nemo in hac gente mendicus, omnium hospitia omnibus communia."—*Descr. Cambriæ*, c. 9. "Omnium rerum largissimi, ciborum sibi quisque parcissimus."—GUALT. MAPES, *De Nugis Curialium*, ii. 20.

[2] Triades of Dymvall Moëlmud, 54, ap. WALTER, p. 315.

ments, played with a perfection which delighted the foreign hearers, who were at the same time always struck, amid all the skilful turns of musical art, by the constant repetition of sweet and melancholy chords, which seemed to reflect, as in the music of Ireland, the candid genius and cruel destiny of the Celtic race.[1]

The bards themselves, singers and poets, sometimes even princes and warriors, presided over the musical education of the country as well as over its intellectual development. But they did not confine themselves to song; they also fought and died for national independence; the harp in their hands was often only the auxiliary of the sword, and one weapon the more against the Saxon.[2] The bards.

This powerful corporation, which was constituted in a hierarchical form, had survived the ruin of the Druids, and appeared in the sixth century in its fullest splendour in the centre of those poetic assemblies,[3] presided over by the kings and chiefs

[1] "Qui matutinis horis adveniunt, puellarum affatibus et cytherarum modulis usque ad vesperam delectantur: domus enim hic quælibet puellas habet ad cytharas ad hoc deputatas. . . . In musico modulamine non uniformiter, ut alibi; sed multipliciter multisque modis et modulis cantilenas emittunt, adeo ut in turba canentium, sicut huic genti mos est, quot videas capita, tot audias carmina discriminaque vocum, varia in unam denique sub B mollis dulcedine blanda consonantiam et organicum convenientia melodiam. . . . In musicis instrumentis dulcedine aures deliniunt et demulcent, tanta modulorum celeritate, pariter et subtilitate feruntur, tantamque discrepantium sub tam præcipiti digitorum rapiditate consonantiam præstant. . . . Semper autem ab molli incipiunt et in idem redeunt, ut cuncta sub jucundæ sonoritatis dulcedine compleantur." —Giraldus Cambrensis, c. 10, 12, 13.

[2] A. de la Borderie, p. 179. La Villemarqué, *Les Bardes Bretons.*

[3] The *Eisteddvods.* An attempt has been made to revive them.

of the country, which were a truly national institution, and continued to exist until the latest days of Welsh independence. In the numerous relics of their fertile activity recently brought to light by efforts which are as patriotic as intelligent,[1] but still insufficiently elucidated—in those *triads* which, under the comparatively recent form known to us, disguise but faintly the highest antiquity—are to be found treasures of true poetry, in which the savage grandeur of a primitive race, tempered and purified by the teachings and mysteries of the Gospel, seems to play in a thousand limpid currents which sparkle in the morning sunlight of history, before running into and identifying themselves with the great river of Christian tradition in the West.

Christianity of the Gael.

For the Christian religion was adopted, cherished, and defended amidst the mountains of Cambria with not less fervour and passion than national independence. Kings and chiefs there were not more blameless than elsewhere. There, too, as everywhere else, the abuse of strength and the exercise of power engendered every kind of crime: too often perjury, adultery, and murder appear in their annals.[2] But at the same time faith and repentance often reclaimed their rights over souls

[1] Those of Williams ab Jolo, of Williams ab Ithel, of the two Owens, of Stephens, of Walter, and, above all, of M. de la Villemarqué, who has been the first to open up to literary France the history of a race naturally so dear to the Bretons of Armorica.

[2] See the numerous examples collected by Lingard (*Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. ii. p. 362), in the *Book of Llandaff*, and other Welsh documents.

not so much corrupt as gone astray. In imitation of the great Arthur, who was crowned, according to Celtic tradition, in 516, by a holy archbishop called Dubricius, they almost all showed themselves zealous for the service of God and generous to the Church; and the people, separated from Rome by the waves of blood in which the Saxon invasion had drowned British Christianity, soon displayed again that natural tendency which marked them out to the Norman conquerors as the most zealous of all the pilgrims who made their eager way to the tombs of the apostles.[1]

Coronation of Arthur.

The bards, though they had existed before Christianity, far from being hostile to it, lived in an intimate and cordial alliance with the clergy, and especially with the monks. Each monastery had its bard—at once poet and historian—who chronicled the wars, alliances, and other events of the age. Every three years these national annalists, like the pontiffs of ancient Rome, assembled to compare their narratives, and to register them at the foot of the code of *Good customs* and *ancient liberties* of the country, of which they were the guardians.[2] It was in these monastic

Union of the bards and the monks.

[1] "Præ omni peregrino labore Romam peregre libentius eundo, devotis mentibus apostolorum limina propensius adorant."—*Cambriæ Descriptio*, p. 891, ed. 1602. Let us repeat once more, that in none of the numerous relics of Welsh archæology and geography recently published can there be found the slightest trace of hostility, either systematic or temporary, against the Holy See.

[2] WALTER, *op. cit.*, p. 33. LLOYD, *History of Cambria*, ed. Powell, præf., p. 9.

schools also that the bards were trained to poetry and to music. The best known among them, Taliesin, was educated, like the historian Gildas, in the Monastery of Llancarvan.[1]

A bard, while celebrating the fame of a hermit, is surprised by a flood.

Let us here quote one incident out of a hundred which throws light upon the singularly intimate connection existing between the poetry of the Welsh bards and the legends of the monastic orders, while it shows at the same time the proud intrepidity of the Celtic character. The father of the founder of the Monastery of Llancarvan having become a hermit, as will be narrated further on, died in the odour of sanctity, and was buried in a church, to which crowds were soon attracted by the miraculous cures accomplished. Among those crowds came a bard with the intention of making a poem in honour of the new saint. While he composed his lines a sudden flood ravaged the surrounding country, and penetrated even into the church itself. All the neighbouring population and their cattle had already perished, and the waters continued to rise. The bard, while composing his poem, took refuge in the higher storey of the church, and then upon the roof; he mounted from rafter to rafter pursued by the flood, but still continuing to improvise his lines, and drawing from danger the inspiration which had been previously wanting. When the water subsided, from the tomb of the hermit to the Severn, there remained no living

[1] La Villemarqué, *Poëmes des Bardes Bretons*, 1850, p. 44.

creature except the bard, and no other edifice standing except the church upon which he had put together his heroic strains.[1]

Relics which float on the sea of legends.

In this sea of Celtic legend, where neither fables nor anachronisms are sufficient to obscure the vigorous and constant affirmation of Catholic faith and British patriotism, a few names of monastic founders and missionaries still survive. They have been rescued from forgetfulness not only by the revived learning of Cambrian archæologists, but also by faithful popular tradition, even after the complete and lamentable extinction of Catholicism in Wales.[2] While surveying their lives, and examining the general scope of the monastic legends and institu-

[1] "Britannus quidem versificator Britannice versificans, composuit carmina a gente sua. . . . Nondum eadem finita erant a compositore. . . Marina undositas contexit campestria, submergit habitatores et ædificia: equi cum bobus natant in aqua: matres tenebant filios præ manibus . . . fiunt cadavera. Cum viderit undositatem altissimam imminere, suscepit componere quartam partem carminum. Dum incepisset, impleta est fluctibus: post hæc ascendit trabes superius, et secutus est iterum tumens fluctus tertio super tectum, nec cessat ille fungi laudibus. Illis finitis Britannus poeta evasit, domus fulciens stabilivit."—*Vita S. Gundleii*, c. 11, ap. Rees, p. 15.

[2] See the important publication entitled *Lives of the Cambro-British Saints of the Fifth and immediate successive Centuries, from ancient Welsh and Latin MSS.*, by the Rev. W. Rees, Llandovery, 1853; a work to which nothing is wanting except a historical and geographical commentary, adapted for foreign readers. It is entirely distinct from the *Essay on the Welsh Saints*, by the Rev. Rice Rees, so much praised by Walter, but which I have not been able to meet with. The biographies published by Rees, from the MS. in the Cottonian Library, are partly in Welsh and partly in Latin; they must have been, not written, but certainly retouched at a later period than that to which in the first place one is tempted to attribute them. By the side of details evidently contemporary and local are to be found traces of declamatory interpolations, which must have been the work of a posterity much less devoted than we are to local colour and historical authenticity.

tions connected with them, the existence of a double influence which attracts the looks and steps of the Gael from their native mountains to Armorica in the south, and to Ireland in the west, becomes immediately apparent; as is also the constant reflux of these two countries back upon Great Britain, from whence had come their first missionaries, and the religious and national life of which had concentrated itself more and more in Cambria.

Reciprocal influence exercised by Cambria, Armorica, and Ireland upon each other.

The Saxon invason, as has been already seen,[1] had thrown upon the shores of Gaul a crowd of fugitives, who, transformed into missionaries, had created a new Britain, invincibly Christian and Catholic, at the gates of Merovingian France. The most celebrated among these missionaries, Tugdual, Samson, Malo, and Paul Aurelian, had been educated in the Cambrian monasteries, from whence also the historian Gildas and the bard Taliesin accompanied them beyond the seas. From the earliest days of her conversion Ireland had received a similar emigration. The greater part of these pious and brave missionaries came back once at least in their lives to visit the country which they had left, leading with them disciples, born in other Celtic lands, but eager to carry back to the dear and much-threatened homes of insular Britain the light and fervour which had first been received from them.[2] Thence arises the singular uni-

[1] See *ante*, vol. ii.

[2] "Sicut hiemale alvearium, arridente vere, animos extollens . . .

formity of proper names, traditions, miracles, and anecdotes, among the legends of the three countries, a uniformity which has often degenerated into inextricable confusion.

The love of the Celtic monks for travel.

One particular, however, which imprints a uniform and very distinct character upon all the holy monks of Celtic origin, is their extraordinary love for distant and frequent journeys—and it is one of the points in which the modern English resemble them most. At that distant age, in the midst of barbarian invasions, and of the local disorganisation of the Roman world, and consequently in the face of obstacles which nothing in Europe as it now exists can give the slightest idea of, they are visible, traversing immense distances, and scarcely done with one laborious pilgrimage before they begin again or undertake another. The journey to Rome, or even to Jerusalem, which finds a place in the legend of almost every Cambrian or Irish saint, seems to have been sport to them. St Kentigern, for example, went seven times in succession to Rome.[1]

Kentigern, founder of St Asaph. 550? 612.

This same Kentigern, whom we shall meet again hereafter as the missionary bishop of the southern Scots and Picts, is said to have been born of one of those irregular unions which evidence either domestic derangement or the abuse of power among

aliud foras emittit examen, ut alibi mellificet, ita *Letavia* (the ancient name of Armorica), accrescente serenitate religionis, catervam sanctorum ad originem unde exierunt, transmittit.—*Vit. S. Paterni*, ap. Rees, *Cambro-British Saints*.

[1] Act SS. Bolland., t. i. January, p. 819.

the chiefs and great men of the country, and which are so often referred to in the annals of Celtic hagiography.[1] He was none the less one of the principal monastic personages in Cambria, where he founded, at the junction of the Clwyd[2] and Elwy, an immense monastery, inhabited by nine hundred and sixty-five monks, three hundred of whom, being illiterate, cultivated the fields; three hundred worked in the interior of the monastery; and the three hundred and sixty-five others celebrated divine worship without interruption.[3] This monastery became at the same time an episcopal see, which still exists under the name of St Asaph, the successor of Kentigern.[4]

This was not, however, either the oldest or most important monastic colony of Cambria, where, as in Saxon England, every bishopric was cradled in a monastery. More than a century before Kentigern, Dubricius, whose long life, if tradition is to be be-

Dubricius, founder of Llandaff.

[1] "Matrem habuit Pictorum regis filiam. . . . Ea seu vi compressa, seu dolo, a nobili adolescente cum uterum gereret, auctorem prodere . . . pertinenter fertur recusasse. . . . Plurium ex eadem Scottorum ac Britannorum gente sanctorum par ortus narratur, Fursæi, Davidis," &c.—BOLLAND., p. 815.

[2] This is the Clwyd of Wales and not the Clyde at Glasgow where St Kentigern was bishop. There are also two rivers Dee—one in Wales and one in Scotland—which occasions a confusion of which it is well to be warned.

[3] BOLLAND., p. 819. This monastery was at first called Llan-Elwy.

[4] Each tribe, every little princedom of Wales, had its bishopric. Llandaff for the Silurians, Menevia (afterwards St David's) for the Demetes, &c. There was one also at Margam, which afterwards became a celebrated Cistercian abbey. The ruins, enclosed and preserved with care in the splendid residence of a branch of the house of Talbot, are well worthy of being visited and admired.

lieved, made him the contemporary of Patrick and Palladius as well as of King Arthur, is instanced as the first founder of a great monastic centre in Cambria, from which religious colonies swarmed off continually to Armorica and to Ireland. Dubricius was ordained bishop at Llandaff in the south of Wales by St Germain of Auxerre, and ended his career in the north as a hermit, after having assembled at one period more than a thousand auditors round his pulpit. Among these the most illustrious were Iltud and David.

Iltud, a converted bandit, founds the great Cambrian Monastery of Bangor.

Iltud, or Eltut, who was also a disciple of St Germain, founded the great Monastery of Bangor upon the banks of the Dee, which became a centre of missionary enterprise, as well as of political resistance to the foreign conquerors; it was reckoned to consist of seven divisions, each of three hundred monks, who all lived by the labour of their hands. It was a veritable army, yet still a half less than that of the four thousand monks of the other Bangor,[1] on the other side of the Channel, in Ireland, which was destined to be the cradle of St Columbanus and St Gall, the monastic apostles of eastern France and of Switzerland.[2]

[1] There was, besides, a third Bangor or Banchor, which is the existing bishopric of that title, and was also founded by a disciple of Dubricius, the holy abbot Daniel, who died about 548. This little episcopal see, situated on the sea-coast, in the county of Caernarvon, has often been confounded with the great monastery of the same name which was in Flintshire, on the banks of the Dee. Ban-gor, which is interpreted to mean *magnus circulus*, seems, besides, to have been a sort of generic name for monastic congregations or enclosures.

[2] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 399.

Iltud was born in Armorica, but his curious legend, some touching details of which our readers will thank us for quoting, records that he was attracted to Wales by the fame of his cousin, King Arthur. He began his life there as a man of war and of rapine; but he was converted while hawking by the sight of a catastrophe which befell his companions, who, at the moment when they had extorted from the holy abbot Cadoc, the founder of Llancarvan, fifty loaves, a measure of beer, and a fat pig, to satisfy their hunger, were swallowed up by the earth, which opened under their feet. Iltud, terrified by this lesson and counselled by the abbot Cadoc, consecrated himself to the service of God in solitude, even although he was married and dearly loved his young and beautiful wife. At first, she desired to accompany him and share with him the hut of branches which he had built on the banks of the Tave, in Gloucestershire. "What!" said an angel who appeared to him in a dream: "thou also art enthralled by the love of a woman? Certainly thy wife is beautiful, but chastity is more beautiful still." Obedient to that voice, he abandoned his wife, and at the same time his horses and followers, buried himself in a deep wood, and there built an oratory which the number of his disciples soon changed into a convent. He divided his life between great agricultural labours and frequent struggles with the robber-kings and chiefs of the neighbourhood. He distinguished himself specially by constructing im-

mense dykes against the floods from which Wales seems to have suffered so much. His wife pursued him even into this new solitude; but when she discovered him at the bottom of a ditch which he was himself digging, with his body and face covered with mud, she saw that it was no longer her fair knight of other days, and thenceforward gave up visiting him, lest she should displease God and the friend of God. Later in his life he shut himself up in a cave where he had only the cold stone for his bed. He took delight in this solitary lair for four long years, and left it only twice, to protect his monastery against violence and robbery. He died at Dol, in that Armorica which he had always loved, and where he took pleasure in sending in times of famine, to help his Breton countrymen beyond seas, shiploads of grain which were provided by the labours of his Welsh community.[1]

He is pursued by his wife, who will not consent to his conversion.

[1] "Princeps militiæ et tribunus . . . miles olim celeberrimus. . . . Accipitrem per volatiles instigabat. . . . Astabat angelus ammonens: Te quoque muliebris amor occupat . . . uxor est decora sed castimonia est melior. . . . Uxore consociante et armigeris . . . composuit tegmen ex arundineto ut non plueret super lectum. . . . Mulier licet induta finxit se frigescere cum tremulo pectore, quatenus posset in lecto denuo collateralis jacere. . . . Operatus est immensam fossam limo et lapidibus mixtam, quam retruderet irruentem undam. . . . Ubi operosum vidit fossorem per assidua fossura lutulentum perfaciens . . . inquisivit ab eo suave colloquium. . . . Conspexit illa vilem habitum . . . non sicut antea viderat militem speciosum. . . . Remansit itaque . . . nunquam amplius visitans eum, quæ nolebat displicere Deo et Dei dilectissimo. . . . Tota nocte jacebat super frigidam petram . . . quasi diceret:

"Hoc lapis in lecto positus sub pectore nostro,
Hec mea dulcedo: jaceam pro Numine summo.
Mollis erit merces ventura beata beato,
Que manet in cœlo michi debita, quando redibo."

Vita S. Ilituti, Rees, pp. 45, 161-182.

St David, monk and bishop.

David is much more generally known than his co-disciple, Iltut. He has always continued popular among the inhabitants of Wales; and Shakespeare informs us that, even since the Reformation, the Welsh have retained the custom of wearing a leek in their hats upon his feast-day.[1] His history has been often written,[2] and through the transformation of the legend it is still easy to recognise in it the salutary sway of a great monk and bishop over souls which were faithful to religion, but yet in full conflict with those savage and sensual impulses which are to be found only too universally among all men and all nations, in the centre of civilisation as on the verge of barbarism. The origin, indeed, of the holy

[1] "Pistol. Art thou of Cornish crew?
King Henry. No, I'm a Welshman.
Pistol. Knowest thou Fluellen?
King. Yes.
Pistol. Tell him I'll knock his leek about his pate
Upon St Davy's day."
And afterwards:—
"Fluellen. I do believe your majesty takes no scorn
To wear the leek upon St Davy's day.
King. I wear it for a memorable honour:
For I am Welsh, you know, good countryman."
King Henry V.

[2] Notably by an anonymous writer, of whose work the Franciscan Colgan has published a first version in his *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ*, vol. i. Ricemarch, the successor of David as bishop of Menevia towards 1085, gave a much more complete version of this first biography, which has been published by Rees in his *Lives of Cambro-British Saints*. Another of his successors, the famous Giraldus Cambrensis, has also written a life of St David, which may be found in Wharton's *Anglia Sacra*, vol. ii. The date and duration of his life is, however, very uncertain: according to Usserius he lived between 472 and 554; according to the Bollandists, between 447 and 544; according to other authorities, between 484 and 566.

patron of Cambria himself, like that of St Bridget, the patroness of Ireland, affords a startling proof of a state of affairs both corrupt and violent. He was the son of a nun whom the king of the country—a nephew of the great Arthur—met upon the public road, and whom, struck by her beauty, he instantly made the victim of his passion.[1] This crime is told by all the biographers of David, generally so lavish of praise and blame, without the least expression of surprise or indignation. The scribe Paulinus, whose name indicates a Roman origin, and who is known to have been a disciple of St Germain of Auxerre, was charged with the education of the young David, which was as long and complete as possible.[2] He issued from his tutor's hands clothed with the priesthood and devoted to a kind of monastic existence which did not exclude him either from Continental travel, nor from exercising a great influence over men and external affairs. He exercised a double power over his countrymen, by directing one part to cenobitical life, and arming the other with the knowledge and virtue which enabled them to triumph over the dangers of a secular career. It is on

He becomes the Benedict of Cambria.

[1] "Invenit rex obviam sibi sanctam monialem, Nonnitam virginem, puellam pulchram nimis et decoram, quam, concupiscens tetigit vi oppressam."—RICEMARCH, ed. Rees, p. 119. "In quam ut oculos injecit, in cupidinem ejus medullitus exardens, statim equo dilapsus, virgineis amplexibus est delectatus."—GIRALDUS, p. 629.

[2] "Quique eum docuit in tribus partibus lectionis, donec fuit scriba; mansit ibi multis annis legendo, implendoque quod legebat."—RICEMARCH, p. 122.

this latter point that he differs from his illustrious contemporary, St Benedict, whom he resembles in so many other features. Like Benedict, he founded, almost at one time, twelve monasteries; like Benedict, he saw his young disciples tempted to their fall by the voluptuous wiles of shameless women; like Benedict, he was exposed to the danger of being poisoned by traitors in the very bosom of his own community;[1] and, finally, like Benedict, he imposed upon his monks a rule which severely prohibited all individual property, and made manual and intellectual labour obligatory. The agricultural labour thus prescribed was so severe, that the Welsh monks had not only to saw the wood and delve the soil, but even to yoke themselves to the plough, and work without the aid of oxen. As soon as this toil came to an end they returned to their cells to pass the rest of the day in reading and writing; and when thus engaged it was sometimes necessary to stop in the midst of a letter or paragraph, to answer to the first sound of the bell, by which divine service was announced.[2]

[1] "Convocatis ancillis: Ite, inquit uxor satrapæ, ad flumen Alum, et, nudatis corporibus, in conspectu sanctorum ludite. . . . Ancillæ obediunt . . . impudicos exercent ludos . . . concubitus simulant blandos . . . monachoram mentes quorumdam ad libidines protrahunt, quorumdam molestant. Cuncti vero discipuli ejus dixerunt David: Fugiamus ex hoc loco, quia non possumus hic habitare propter molestiam mulierecularum malignantium. Diaconus qui pani ministrare consuluerat, panem veneno confectum mensa imponit, cui coquus et œconomus consenserant." —Ricemarch, p. 125-31.

[2] "Pede manuque laborant, jugum ponunt in humero, suffossarias

In the midst of these severe labours the abbot David had continual struggles with the *satraps* and *magicians*, which, no doubt, means the chiefs of the clan and the Druids, who had not been destroyed in Britain, as in Gaul, by the Roman conquest,[1] and whose last surviving representatives could not see, without violent dislike, the progress of monastic institutions. But the sphere of David's influence and activity was to extend far beyond that of his early work. Having made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he returned thence invested with the office of archbishop, which had been conferred upon him by the patriarch of Jerusalem.[2] On his return he was acknowledged metropolitan of all that part of the island not yet invaded by the Saxons, by two very numerously attended councils,[3] in which he had the honour of striking a

He goes to Jerusalem, and returns Archbishop.

verangasque invicto brachio terre defigunt, sarculos serrasque ad succidendum sanctis ferunt manibus. . . . Boum nulla ad arandum cura introducitur. Quisque sibi et fratribus divitiæ, quisque et bos. . . . Peracto rurali opere, totam ad vesperam pervagabant diem aut legendo aut scribendo aut orando . . . vespere cum nole pulsus audiebatur, quisquis studium detexebat, si enim auribus cujuscumque pulsus resonaret, scripto tunc litere apice vel etiam dimidia ejusdem litere, figura citius assurgentes . . . ecclesiam petunt, eam incompletam dimmittebant."—RICEMARCH, p. 127. I quote literally the Latin of Ricemarch, which is often very singular. Further on he adds Greek after his fashion.

[1] DŒLLINGER, *Heidenthum und Judenthum*, p. 611.

[2] Compare BOLLAND., *Act. SS.*, Martii, t. i. p. 40.

[3] At Brèves in 519, and at Victoria in 526. The expressions of Ricemarch upon this last synod are worthy of remark, since they prove the presence of abbots beside the bishops of the council, and the undisputed recognition of Roman authority. It remains to be ascertained, however, whether this writer of the eleventh century did not attribute the customs of his own time to a previous age. "Alia synodus . . . in qua collecta episcoporum, sacerdotum, abatum turba . . . cunctorum consensu . . .

519. deathblow at the Pelagian heresy, which had come to life again since the mission of St Germain.

Right of asylum given to David.

One of these councils recognised in his honour a right of asylum, pointed out by ancient authors as the most respected and the most complete which existed in Britain, and which created for all pursued culprits an inviolable refuge wherever there was a field which had been given to David.[1] This is one of the first examples, as conferred upon a monastic establishment, of that right of asylum, afterwards too much extended, and disgracefully abused towards the end of the middle ages, but which, at that far-distant period, was a most important protection to the weak. Who does not understand how irregular and brutal was at that time the pursuit of a criminal; how many vile and violent passions usurped the office of the law; and how justice herself and humanity had reason to rejoice when religion stretched her maternal hands over a

omnium ordinum totius Britanniæ gentis archiepiscopus constitutus. . . . Ex his duabus synodis omnes nostræ patriæ ecclesiæ modum et regulam Romana auctoritate receperunt."

[1] "Dederuntque universi episcopi manus et monarchiam, et *bragminationem* David agio, et consenserunt omnes licitum esse refugium ejus ut daret illud omni stupro et homicide et peccatori, omnique maligno fugienti de loco ad locum pro omni sancto ac regibus et hominibus totius Britanniæ insulæ in omni regno, et in unaquaque regione in qua sit ager consecratus David agio. Et nulli reges neque seniores, neque satrapæ, sed neque episcopi principesve ac sancti audeant præ David agio refugium dare; ipse vero refugium ducit ante unumquemque hominem, et nemo ante ipsum, quia ipse est caput et previus ac *bragmaticus* omnibus Brittonibus. Et statuerunt omnes sancti anathema esset et maledictum, quisquis non servaverit illud decretum scilicet refugium sancti David."—Ricemarch, p. 140.

fugitive unjustly accused, or even over a culprit who might be worthy of excuse or indulgence!

David immediately resumed his monastic and ecclesiastical foundations,[1] and restored for the first time from its ruins the Church of Glastonbury, so that it might consecrate the tomb of his cousin King Arthur.[2] He himself died more than a hundred years old, surrounded by the reverence of all, and in reality the chief of the British nation.[3] He was buried in the Monastery of Menevia, which he had built at the southern extremity of Wales, facing Ireland, on a site which had been indicated thirty years before by St Patrick, the apostle of that island. It was of all his foundations the one most dear to him, and he had made it the seat of a diocese which has retained his name. 544.

His tomb becomes the national sanctuary of Cambria.

After his death the monastic tomb of the great bishop and British chief became a much-frequented place of pilgrimage. Not only the Welsh, Bretons, and Irish came to it in crowds, but three Anglo-Norman kings — William the Conqueror, Henry II., and Edward I.—appeared there in their turn. David was canonised by Pope Calistus II. in 1120, at a period when Wales still retained its independence. He became from that moment, and has remained until the present time, the patron of Cambria. A group of half-ruined religious build-

[1] "Per cuncta totius patriæ loca monasteria construxere fratres . . . quanta monachorum examina seminavit."

[2] Ricemarch, p. 125; Dugdale, t. i. p. 1-7; Bolland., *loc. cit.*

[3] "Omnis Britanniæ gentis caput et patriæ honor."—Rees, p. 140.

ings, forming altogether one of the most solemn and least visited relics of Europe, still surrounds the ancient cathedral which bears his name, and crowns the imposing promontory, thrust out into the sea like an eagle's beak, from the south-eastern corner of the principality of Wales, which is still more deserving than the two analogous headlands of Cornwall and Armorica, of the name of Finisterre.[1]

Legend of St Cadoc.

522-590?

Immediately after the period occupied in the annals of Cambria by King Arthur and the monk-bishop David, another monastic and patriotic saint becomes visible, who, like his predecessor, remained long popular among the Britons of Wales, and is so still among the Bretons of Armorica. This was St Cadoc or Kadok, a personage regarding whom it will be very difficult to make an exact distinction between history and legend, but whose life has left so profound an impression upon the Celtic races, that we may be permitted to borrow from it certain details, which will set in a clear light the faith and manners of these races and of that age.[2] His father, Gundliew or Guen-Liou, surnamed the Warrior, one of the petty kings of southern Cambria, having heard much of the beauty of the daughter of a neighbouring chief, had her carried off, by a band of three hundred vassals, from the midst of

[1] A group of rocks near this promontory is still called *The Bishop and his Clerks.* It lies a little way to the north of the celebrated Roads of Milford Haven and the great dockyard of the English navy at Pembroke.

[2] *Vita S. Cadoci*, ap. Rees, *op. cit.*, p. 22-96; Hersart de la Villemarqué, *La Légende Celtique*, p. 127-227.

her sisters, and from the door of her own chamber, in her father's castle.[1] The father hastened to the rescue of his daughter with all his vassals and allies, and soon overtook Guen-Liou, who rode with the young princess at the croup, going softly not to fatigue her. It was not an encounter favourable for the lover: two hundred of his followers perished, but he himself succeeded in escaping safely with the lady, whose attractions he had afterwards to conceal from the passion of King Arthur;[2] for that great king is far from playing in all the monastic legends the chivalric and disinterested part afterwards attributed to him by the host of national and European traditions of which he is the hero. Of this rude warrior and his beautiful princess was to be born the saint who has been called the Doctor of the Cambrian race, and who founded the great monastic establishment which has been already mentioned here. The very night of his birth the soldiers, or, to speak more justly, the robber-followers (*latrones*), of the king his father, who had

Son of a stolen princess, and of a robber-king.

[1] Talgarth, nine miles from the town of Brecknock. The name of the beautiful princess was Gwladys, in Latin Gladusa, and that of her father Brychan or Brachan.

[2] "Puellam eleganti quidem specie, sed et forma valde decoram. . . . Virginem ante conclavis suæ januam cum ipsius sororibus sedentem pudicisque sermonibus vacantem . . . statim vi capientes obstinato cursu regrediuntur . . . Gundlaus . . . jussit puellam afferri . . . haud fugiendo, sed pedetentim secum gestans adolescentulam in equo. . . . Ubi corpore incolumis cum prænotata virgine . . . terminos suæ terræ attigisset . . . ecce Arthurus: . . . Scitote me vehementer in concupiscentiam puellæ hujus quam ille miles equitando devehit accendi."—*Vita S. Cadoci*, ap. Rees, p. 23.

been sent to pillage the neighbours right and left, stole the milch cow of a holy Irish monk, who had no sustenance, he nor his twelve disciples, except the abundant milk of this cow. When informed of this nocturnal theft, the monk got up, put on his shoes in all haste, and hurried to reclaim his cow from the king, who was still asleep. The latter took advantage of the occasion to have his new-born son baptised by the pious solitary, and made him promise to undertake the education and future vocation of the infant. The Irishman gave him the name of Cadoc, which in Celtic means warlike; and then, having recovered his cow, went back to his cell to await the king's son, who was sent to him at the age of seven, having already learned to hunt and to fight.[1]

Educated by an Irish monk.

The young prince passed twelve years with the Irish monk, whom he served, lighting his fire and cooking his food, and who taught him grammar according to Priscian and Donatus.[2] Preferring the life of a recluse to the throne of his father, he went to Ireland for three years, to carry on his education at Lismore, a celebrated monastic school, after which he returned to Cambria, and continued his studies

[1] "Satellites suos sæpius ad rapinam et latrocinia instigabat. . . . Quidam ex Gundleii latronibus ad quoddam oppidum . . . furandi causa pervenerunt, quos prenotatus Gundleius rex fures diligebat, eosque sæpius ad latrocinia instigabat. . . . Surge velociter . . . et calcia caligas tuas, nam bos tua a furibus exstat ablata . . . ad triclinium in quo dormierat rex . . . adepta prædicta bove."—Rees, pp. 85, 25, 27.

[2] "Tibi filium meum commendo . . . ut illum liberalibus artibus divinisque dogmatibus erudias. . . . Illum Donato, Priscianoque, necnon aliis artibus, per annos duodecim diligentius instruxit."—P. 28.

under a famous British rhetorician, newly arrived from Italy, who taught Latin and the liberal arts after the best Roman system.[1] This doctor had more pupils than money: famine reigned in his school. One day poor Cadoc, who fasted continually, was learning his lesson in his cell, seated before a little table, and leaning his head on his hands, when suddenly a white mouse, coming out of a hole in the wall, jumped on the table, and put down a grain of corn; but being unable to attract the attention of the student, she returned with a second and third grain, and continued until seven grains lay before his eyes. Then Cadoc rising, followed the mouse into a cellar, where he found deposited an enormous heap of corn.[2] This wheat, a gift of Providence, gave sustenance to the master and his pupils: and, according to the wish of Cadoc, was shared with all who were in want like themselves.

He founds Llancarvan, the burying-place of the kings and nobles, and the great monastic school of Wales.

Having early decided to embrace monastic life, he hid himself in a wood, where, after making a narrow escape from assassination by the armed swineherd of a neighbouring chief, he saw, near a forgotten fountain, an enormous wild boar, white with age, come out of his den, and make three bounds, one after the other, stopping each time, and turning round to stare furiously at the stranger who had

[1] "Ab illo Romano more latinitate doceri non minimum optavit."—*Vita*, c. 8.

[2] "Mus septies eundo et redeundo totidem triticea in suo volumine abdidit, animadvertens indicio divinam sibi adesse miserationem."—*Ibid.*

disturbed him in his resting-place. Cadoc marked with three branches the three bounds of the wild boar, which afterwards became the site of the church, dormitories, and refectory of the great Abbey of Llancarvan, of which he was the founder. The abbey took its name (*Ecclesia Cervorum*) from the celebrated legend, according to which, two deer from the neighbouring wood came one day to replace two idle and disobedient monks who had refused to perform the necessary labour for the construction of the monastery, saying, "Are we oxen, that we should be yoked to carts, and compelled to drag timber?"[1]

Llancarvan, however, was not only a great workshop, where numerous monks, subject to a very severe rule, bowed their bodies under a yoke of continual fatigue, clearing the forests, and cultivating the fields when cleared; it was, besides, a great religious and literary school, in which the study and transcription of the Holy Scriptures held the van, and was followed by that of the ancient authors and their more recent commentators.

Among the numerous pupils whom it received—some to follow the monastic life for the rest of their days, some only to carry on their ordinary education—were many chiefs' and kings' sons like Cadoc himself. To these he addressed special instructions, which may be summed up in the two sentences which a prince of North Wales remembered long

[1] "Numquid more boum plaustra gestare valemus?"

after to have heard from his own lips—"Remember that thou art a man;" "There is no king like him who is king of himself."[1]

Poetic aphorisms of Cadoc.

Cadoc loved to sum up, chiefly under the form of sentences in verse and poetical aphorisms, the instructions given to the pupils of the Llancarvan cloister. A great number of such poetical utterances, which have been preserved in the memory of the Gael and brought to light by modern erudition, are attributed to him. We instance some, which are not the less interesting and touching, for having been produced in a British cloister in the sixth century, under the disturbing influences of Saxon invasion, and far from all the fountains of classic wisdom and beauty:—

Truth is the elder daughter of God.
Without light nothing is good.
Without light there is no piety.
Without light there is no religion.
Without light there is no faith.
There is no light without the sight of God.

The same thought is afterwards reproduced under another form:—

Without knowledge, no power.
Without knowledge, no wisdom.
Without knowledge, no freedom.
Without knowledge, no beauty.
Without knowledge, no nobleness.
Without knowledge, no victory.
Without knowledge, no honour.

[1] La Villemarqué, p. 184.

Without knowledge, no God.
The best of attitudes is humility.
The best of occupations, work.
The best of sentiments, pity.
The best of cares, justice.
The best of pains, that which a man takes to make peace between two enemies.
The best of sorrows, sorrow for sin.
The best of characters, generosity.

The poet then makes his appearance by the side of the theologian and moralist :—

No man is the son of knowledge if he is not the son of poetry.
No man loves poetry without loving the light ;
Nor the light without loving the truth ;
Nor the truth without loving justice ;
Nor justice without loving God.
And he who loves God cannot fail to be happy.

The love of God was, then, the supreme aim of his teaching as of his life. When one of his disciples asked him to define it, he answered :—

"Love, it is Heaven."
"And hate?" asked the disciple.
"Hate is Hell."
"And conscience?"
"It is the eye of God in the soul of man."[1]

Cadoc asked nothing from the postulants who came to take the cowl in his monastery. On the contrary,

[1] I borrow these quotations from those drawn by M. Walter and M. de la Villemarqué from the collection entitled *Myvyrian Archæology of Wales*, London, 1801-7.

in order to gain admission it was necessary to lay aside everything, even to the last article of dress, and to be received *naked as a shipwrecked man*, according to the expression of the rule.[1] This was the easier to him that he was himself rich by means of the gifts of land given him by his father and maternal grandfather.[2]

Penitence of his father and mother.

Cadoc had the happiness of assisting in the conversion of his father before he became his heir. In the depths of his cloister he groaned over the rapines and sins of the old robber from whom he derived his life and his monastic possessions. Accordingly he sent to his father's house three of his monks, who, after having consulted with the elders and lords of the country, undertook to preach repentance to the father of their abbot. His mother, the beautiful Gladusa, carried off of old by King Guen-Liou, was the first to be touched. "Let us believe," she said, "in our son, and let him be our father for heaven." And it was not long before she persuaded her husband to agree with her. They called their son to make to him public confession of their sins, after which the king said, "Let all my race obey Cadoc with true piety, and after death let all the kings, earls, and chiefs, and all the servants of the kings, be buried in his cemetery."[3] Then the father and son chanted together the psalm, "*Exaudiat te*

[1] La Villemarqué, p. 160.

[2] The boundaries of his lands are very exactly noted by his biographer, Rees, pp. 38, 45, and 336.

[3] Llancarvan actually became the burying-place of the Welsh kings and

Dominus in die tribulationis." When this was ended the king and queen retired into solitude, establishing themselves in the first place at a short distance from each other, in two cabins on the bank of a river. They lived there by the work of their hands, without other food than barley bread, in which there was a mingling of ashes, and cresses, the bitterness of which was sweet to them as a foretaste of heaven. One of their principal austerities, which is also to be found in the history of various other Celtic and Anglo-Saxon saints, was to bathe, in winter as in summer, in cold water in the middle of the night, and to pass its remaining hours in prayer. Cadoc visited them often and exhorted them to perseverance; he ended even by persuading them to give up the comparative sweetness of their life together. His mother was still the first to obey him. She sought out a more profound solitude, and disappeared there. Guen-Liou followed her example. He died soon after in his son's arms, leaving him all his lands.[1] One would fain hope that the same consolation was accorded

nobility as long as the independence of the country lasted; but, strangely enough, King Guen-Liou was not himself buried there.

[1] "Vir Dei pravos proprii genitoris actus congemiscens, sibi condolens . . . Gladusa: . . . Credamur filio nostro, eritque nobis pater in cœlo. . . . Carices fontanæ erant illis in pulmentaria dulces herbe, sed dulcissime que trahebant ad premia. . . . Noluit ut tanta vicinia esset inter illos, ne carnalis concupiscentia a castitate inviolanda perverteret animos. . . . Nunc totam regionem meam, pro quo plures injurias nonnullaque dampna sustinuisti, tibi modo veluti prius coram astantibus cunctis, et meum testamentum hic audientibus commendo."—*Vita S. Cadoci*, c. 24 and 50. *Vita S. Gundleii*, c. 6, 7, 8, ap. Rees.

to a mother so generous, but the legend is silent as to her death.

These patrimonial gifts conferred upon Cadoc great territorial wealth, and an external power which he used to secure around his monastery the safety and wellbeing which were nowhere else to be found. "To know the country of Cadoc," it was said, "it is only necessary to discover where the cattle feed in freedom, where the men fear nothing, and where everything breathes peace."[1] His wealth permitted him to accomplish with success and energy the noble mission which is the most interesting part of his life, in which he appeared as the protector of his dependants and neighbours, the guardian of the goods of the poor, of the honour of women, of the weakness of the humble, and of all the lower classes of the Cambrian people, against the oppression, pillage, violence, and extortions of the princes and the powerful. His personal character, courageous and compassionate, is better evidenced thus than in the position, half of austere solitary, half of feudal chief, which was held by so great a number of monastic superiors in medieval times.

He protects the cultivators of his domain and the neighbourhood against the violence of the great.

We are expressly told that he was at once abbot and prince. "Are you fools," said the steward of one of his domains to the squires of a Cambrian prince who would have taken from him by force

He is at once abbot and prince.

[1] "Hoc erit vobis in signum: cum ad illius patriam solum veneritis, animalia liberius in pascuis pascentia, hominesque fretos ac imperterritos invenietis . . . ab omni belli precinctu indempnes."—*Vita*, c. 20.

the milk of his cows—"are you unaware that our master is a man of great honour and dignity—that he has a family of three hundred men, maintained at his cost, a hundred priests, a hundred knights, and a hundred workmen, without counting women and children?"[1] It is not, however, apparent that he ever fought for his rights by force of arms, as did more than one abbot of later times. But at the head of fifty monks chanting psalms, and with a harp in his hand, he went out to meet the exactors, the robbers, the tyrants, and their followers; and if he did not succeed in arresting their steps and turning them from their evil intentions, he called down upon their heads a supernatural and exemplary chastisement. Sometimes the aggressors were swallowed up in a quagmire, which opened all at once under their feet—and the abyss remained open and gaping, as a warning to future tyrants.[2] Sometimes they were struck with blindness, and wandered groping through the district which they had come to ravage. Such was the fate of the prince whose messengers had carried off the daugh-

[1] "Abbas enim erat et princeps. . . . Numquid excordes estis, estimantes quod dominus noster honoris sit vir magni et dignitatis cum utique magnam familiam trecentorum virorum, scilicet clericos, totidemque milites atque ejusdem numeri operarios, exceptis parvulis et mulieribus, possideatur."—*Vita*, c. 15, 20.

[2] "Prædones infausti . . . secuti sunt eum fere L. clerici obviantes funesto tyranno cum canticis et hymnis et psalmis. . . . Terra aperuit os suum . . . et absorbuit tyrannum vivum cum suis. . . . Fossaque usque in hodiernum diem cunctis transeuntibus liquet . . . quæ patula semper in hujus rei testimonium permanens a nullo oppilari permittitur."—*Vita*, c. 15.

ter of one of Cadoc's stewards, whose fresh beauty had gained for her the name of Aval-Kain, or *Fresh as an apple*. Her relations mounted their horses, and, giving the alarm everywhere by sound of trumpet, pursued the ravishers and killed them all except one, who escaped to tell the tale to his master. The latter returned with a more numerous following to put the neighbourhood to fire and sword; but Cadoc reassured the people, who surrounded him with groans and cries. "Be at rest," he said; "courage and confidence; the Lord will bring our enemies to nothing." And, in fact, the invader and his followers were soon seen groping their way like the blind. "Why comest thou here in arms to pillage and ravage the country?" Cadoc asked of their leader; and he restored him his sight and the means of returning to his country only after having made him swear to maintain perpetual peace. "It is thou whom I will take for my confessor before all other,"[1] said the contrite and comforted prince. On another occasion the smoking of a burning barn blinded the leader whose men had set it on fire. He too was healed by the holy abbot, and presented to Cadoc his

[1] "Ad B. Cadoci pretoris domum venientes ejusdem formosissimam filiam rapuerunt Abalcem nomine, puellam speciosissimam. . . . Consanguinei puellæ caballos suos ascenderunt, cornibusque insonuerunt. . . . Occurrerunt indigenæ hostili timore perterriti, cum nimio planctu. . . . Respondit eis: Estote robusti nec formidetis. . . . Utquid ad meam patriam armata manu prædandi vastandique causa advenisti? Cui rex: . . . Te hodie confessorem mihi, si tibi beneplacitum fuerit, inter dextrales præ omnibus eligo."—*Vita*, c. 19 and 65.

sword, his lance, his buckler, and war-horse completely equipped for battle.[1]

By such services, constantly and everywhere renewed, the power of the monastic order was founded, in Britain as elsewhere, in the souls of the Christian people. Such recollections, transmitted from father to son at the domestic hearth, explain the long existence of a fame so nobly acquired. And it is the desire not only to reward, but, above all, to guarantee and perpetuate an intervention at once so powerful and so blessed, which justifies the vast donations lavished, not less by wise foresight than by the gratitude of nations, upon the men who alone showed themselves always ready to combat the greedy and sensual instincts of the kings and the great, and to punish the odious abuses of wealth and force.

He obtains from King Arthur the same right of asylum as was granted to St David.

The petty robber princes of North Wales were all constrained to recognise the right of asylum and immunity which had been granted to the noble abbot and his monastery by King Arthur, whose states extended to the west and south of Cadoc's domain. For, without any fear of anachronism, the legend takes pains to connect the popular saint with the great Briton king who was once enamoured of his mother; and in connection with this, gives one more instance of the brave and liberal charity

[1] "Dum prelocutus Rein in tabernaculo ludens in alea cum suis eunuchis consedisset, fumus ad instar lignei postis, de horreo procedens, recto tramite se ad ipsius papilionem tetendit lumenque oculorum omnium ibidem commanentium obcecavit."—*Vita*, c. 20.

of Cadoc, who, not content with protecting his own oppressed countrymen, opened the gates of Llancarvan to exiles and outlaws, and even received there a prince pursued by the hate of Arthur. A long contest followed between the king and the abbot, which was ended by the solemn recognition of a right of asylum similar to that which had been granted to St David. By the side of this protection guaranteed to fugitives, the principle of *composition* —that is to say, of a ransom for murder, payable in money or in cattle to the relations of the victim —makes its appearance in the abbot's agreements with his rapacious and violent neighbours.[1]

It was thus that the glorious abbot acquired the surname of Cadoc the Wise—a name which still appears at the head of the many poems attributed to him. For, like all the Gaels, he continued faithful to poetry, and often, among his disciples, sang, to the accompaniment of his harp, verses in which he gave full utterance to the religious and patriotic emotions of his heart, as in the poem which has been preserved under the name of the *Hate of Cadoc.*

The Hate of Cadoc.

"I hate the judge who loves money, and the bard who loves war, and the chiefs who do not guard their subjects, and the nations without vigour; I hate houses without dwellers, lands untilled, fields that bear no harvest, landless clans, the agents of error, the oppressors of truth; I hate

[1] *Vita S. Cadoci*, c. 18, 25, 65. La Villemarqué, p. 172-77.

him who respects not father and mother, those who make strife among friends, a country in anarchy, lost learning, and uncertain boundaries; I hate journeys without safety, families without virtue, lawsuits without reason, ambushes and treasons, falsehood in council, justice unhonoured; I hate a man without a trade, a labourer without freedom, a house without a teacher, a false witness before a judge, the miserable exalted, fables in place of teaching, knowledge without inspiration, sermons without eloquence, and a man without conscience."[1]

Cadoc takes refuge in Armorica: is anxious for the salvation of the poet Virgil.

The invasion of the Saxon idolaters, however, with all its accompanying horrors and profanations, reached in succession the banks of the Severn and the Usk, which bounded the monastic domains of Cadoc. He found himself compelled to leave Wales and make sail for Armorica, where so many illustrious exiles, who have since become the apostles and legendary patrons of that glorious province, had preceded him. He founded there a new monastery on a little desert island of the archipelago of Morbihan, which is still shown from the peninsula of Rhuys; and to make his school accessible to the children of the district, who had to cross to the isle and back again in a boat, he threw a stone bridge four hundred and fifty feet long across this arm of the sea. In this modest retreat the Cambrian prince resumed his monastic life, adapting it especially to

[1] Translated by M. de la Villemarqué, who publishes the original text, p. 309 of his *Légende Celtique*.

his ancient scholarly habits. He made his scholars learn Virgil by heart; and one day, while walking with his friend and companion, the famous historian Gildas,[1] with his Virgil under his arm, the abbot began to weep at the thought that the poet whom he loved so much might be even then perhaps in hell. At the moment when Gildas reprimanded him severely for that *perhaps*, protesting that without any doubt Virgil must be damned, a sudden gust of wind tossed Cadoc's book into the sea. He was much moved by this accident, and, returning to his cell, said to himself, "I will not eat a mouthful of bread nor drink a drop of water before I know truly what fate God has allotted to those who sang upon earth as the angels sing in heaven." After this he fell asleep, and soon after, dreaming, heard a soft voice addressing him. "Pray for me, pray for me," said the voice—"never be weary of praying; I shall yet sing eternally the mercy of the Lord."

The next morning a fisherman of Belz brought him a salmon, and the saint found in the fish the book which the wind had snatched out of his hands.[2]

He returns to Britain, and dies, murdered by the Saxons.

After a sojourn of several years in Armorica, Cadoc left his new community flourishing under the gov-

[1] "Britannus egregius scholasticus et scriptor optimus."—*Vita S. Cadoci*, p. 59.

[2] La Villemarqué, p. 203. The same sentiment is to be found here which dictated that sequence, pointed out by Ozanam and sung at Mantua, upon St Paul's visit to the tomb of Virgil:—

"Ad Maronis mausoleum
Ductus, fudit super eum
Piæ rorem lacrymæ,

"Quem te, inquit, reddidissem,
Si te vivum invenissem,
Poetarum maxime!"

ernment of another pastor, and to put in practice that maxim which he loved to repeat to his followers—"Wouldst thou find glory?—march to the grave!"—he returned to Britain, not to find again the ancient peace and prosperity of his beloved retreat of Llancarvan,[1] but to establish himself in the very centre of the Saxon settlements, and console the numerous Christians who had survived the massacres of the conquest, and lived under the yoke of a foreign and heathen race. He settled at Weedon, in the county of Northampton;[2] and it was there that he awaited his martyrdom.

One morning when, vested with the ornaments of his ecclesiastical rank, he was celebrating the divine sacrifice, a furious band of Saxon cavalry, chasing the Christians before them, entered pell-mell into the church, and crowded towards the altar. The saint continued the sacrifice as calmly as he had begun it. A Saxon chief, urging on his horse, and brandishing his lance, went up to him and struck him to the heart. Cadoc fell on his knees; and his last desire, his last thought, were still for his dear countrymen: "Lord," he said, while dying, "in-

[1] "Ad proprias sui cari ruris sedes Llandcarvan."—*Vita*, c. 9.

[2] All historians seem to agree in translating thus the *Beneventum*, in the Latin text, which has given occasion to strange speculations upon the episcopate of Cadoc at Benevento, in Italy. It is not positively stated in the Latin that Cadoc's murderers were Saxons, but such is the unvarying tradition, which is also affirmed by M. de la Villemarqué, on the authority of the Chronicle of Quimperlé, in the possession of Lord Beaumont, at Castleton (Yorkshire), and according to the inscription of a tablet in the Chapel of St Cadoc, near Entel, in Brittany.

visible King, Saviour Jesus, grant me one grace—protect the Christians of my country;[1] let their trees still bear fruit, their fields give corn; fill them with goods and blessings; and, above all, be merciful to them, that, after having honoured Thee on earth, they may glorify Thee in heaven!"

His popularity lasts till the battle of the Thirty.

The Britons of Cambria and of Armorica long disputed the glory and privilege of paying to Cadoc those honours which were due to him at once in a religious and national point of view. But the latter have remained the most faithful; and eight centuries after his death the great Celtic monk and patriot was still invoked as their special patron by the Breton knights in the famous battle of the Thirty, where Beaumanoir drank his own blood. On their way to the field they went into a chapel dedicated to St Cadoc, and appealed to him for aid, and returned victorious, singing a Breton ballad, which ends thus—

"He is not the friend of the Bretons who does not cry for joy to see our warriors return with the yellow broom in their casques;

"He is no friend of the Bretons, nor of the Breton saints, who does not bless St Cadoc, the patron of our warriors;

"He who does not shout, and bless, and worship, and sing, 'In heaven, as on earth, Cadoc has no peer.'"[2]

[1] La Villemarqué, p. 215.

[2] The Breton text of this ballad has been published by M. de la Ville-

St Winifred, her martyrdom and her fountain.

The long popularity of this Cambrian Briton upon the two shores of that sea which separates the Celtic countries is, however, eclipsed by that of a young girl, whose history is unknown, and her faith unpractised, by the Welsh population of the present day, but whose memory has nevertheless been preserved among them with superstitious fidelity. This is Winifred, the young and beautiful daughter of one of the lords of Wales. Flying from the brutality of a certain King Caradoc,[1] who had found her alone in her father's house, she fled to the church where her parents were praying, but was pursued by the king, who struck off her head on the very threshold of the church. At the spot where the head of this martyr of modesty struck the soil, there sprang up an abundant fountain, which is still frequented, and even venerated, by a population divided into twenty different sects, but animated by one common hatred for Catholic truth. This fountain has given its name to the town of Holywell. Its source is covered by a fine Gothic porch of three arches, under which it forms a vast basin, where, from morning to evening, the sick and infirm of a region ravaged by heresy come to bathe, with a strange confidence in the miraculous virtue of those icy waters.

marqué. The touching narrative of his visit to the ruins of Llancarvan, and of the devotion which still draws a crowd of pilgrims into the isle of Morbihan, which was inhabited by the saint, will be found in his *Légende Celtique*.

[1] Evidently the same name as that of the Caractacus of Tacitus.

The monk Beino enemy of the Saxons. About 616.

According to the legend, this virgin martyr was restored to life by a holy monk called Beino, who, like all the monks of the time, had founded many convents, and received from the princes many contributions for his foundations. Notwithstanding, he exercised a conscientious reserve as to accepting anything which the donor had not a full title to bestow. One day he superintended, in his own person, the building of a church upon an estate which had just been granted to him by King Cadwallon, the conqueror of the Northumbrian[1] Saxons, or rather, had been given in exchange for a golden sceptre, of the value of sixty cows. While there, a woman came to him, bringing a new-born child to be baptised. The cries of the child were deafening. "What ails the child, that he cries so much?" Beino at length asked.

"He has a very good reason," said the woman.

"What is the reason?" asked the monk.

"This land which you have in your possession, and on which you are building a church, belonged to his father."

At that moment Beino called out to his workmen, "Stop; let nothing more be done till I have baptised the child, and spoken to the king." Then he hastened to Caernarvon to the monarch; "Why," cried the monk, "hast thou given me these lands which belong justly to another? The child in this

[1] Bede, book ii. c. 20; book iii. c. 1.

woman's arms is the heir: let them be restored to him."

Nothing can be more noble and touching than this evidence of the respect of the cenobites for that sacred right of property which has been so constantly and vilely, and with such impunity, violated to their hurt!

The life of this monk, which was originally written only in the Welsh language,[1] contains other details not less curious. It was he who planted beside his father's grave an acorn, which grew into a great oak, and which, according to the legend, no Englishman could approach without instant death, though the Welsh took no harm. He, too, it was who was driven to abandon a favourite spot on the banks of the Severn, by the sound of an English voice which he heard with horror, from the other side of the river, cheering on the hounds with Saxon cries. "Take up your frocks and your shoes," he said to his companions, "and, quick, let us depart; this man's nation speaks a language abominable to me: they come to invade us, and take away our goods for ever."

The antipathy between the Cambrians and the Saxons a serious obstacle to the conversion of the latter.

These familiar anecdotes of the monk Beino, as well as the martyrdom of Cadoc, the patriot monk and sage, by the hand of the Anglo-Saxons, prove the insurmountable dislike which rose like a wall between the souls of the Britons and those of the

[1] Published and translated by Rees.

Saxons, more than a century and a half after the arrival of the heathen invaders in Britain. The fertile and generous genius of the Celtic race, overmastered by this patriotic hatred, and by a too just resentment of the violence and sacrilege of the conquest, was thus made powerless to aid in the great work of converting the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity. Not only is it impossible to record a single effort, made by any British monk or prelate, to preach the faith to the conquerors; but even the great historian of the Anglo-Saxons expressly states, that the British inhabitants of the great island had come under a mutual engagement never to reveal the truths of religion to those whose power and neighbourhood they were obliged to endure—and, at the same time, had taken a vindictive resolution, even when they became Christians, to treat them as incurable heathens.[1] St Gregory the Great makes the same accusation against them in still more severe terms. "The priests," he said, "who dwell on the borders of the English neglect them, and, putting aside all pastoral solicitude, refuse to answer to any desire which that people might have to be converted to the faith of Christ." [2]

[1] "Ut nunquam genti Saxonum sive Anglorum secum Britanniam incolenti, verbum fidei prædicando committerent. . . . Cum usque hodie moris sit Brittonum, fidem religionemque Anglorum pro nihilo habere, neque in aliquo eis magis communicare quam cum paganis."—BEDE, i. 22; ii. 20.

[2] Epist. vi. 58, 59.

The idea of seeking among the Britons the instruments of that conversion which was to give another great nation to the Church, must then be relinquished. But in a neighbouring island, in Hibernia, there existed, in the midst of a population of Celts, like the Britons, a flourishing and fertile Church, the spectator, and not the victim, of the Saxon invasion. Let us see if, from that *Island of Saints*, and from its brave and adventurous race, there may not issue a more generous and expansive impulse than could be hoped for amid the bleeding remnants of British Christianity.

CHAPTER III.

MONASTIC IRELAND AFTER ST PATRICK.

Ireland escapes the Rome of the Cæsars to be invaded by the Rome of the Popes.—The British assistants of St Patrick carry there certain usages different from those of Rome.—Division between Patrick and his fellow-labourers.—He would preach the faith to all.—St Carantoc.—Emigrations of the Welsh to Ireland, and of the Irish to Wales.—Disciples of St David in Ireland.—Modonnoc and his bees.—Immense monastic development of Ireland under the influence of the Welsh monks.—The peculiar British usages have nothing to do with doctrine.—Families or clans transformed into monasteries, with their chiefs for abbots.—The three orders of saints.—Irish missionaries on the continent; their journeys and visions.—St Brendan the sailor.—Dega, monk-bishop and sculptor.—Mochuda the shepherd converted by means of music.—Continual preponderance of the monastic element.—Celebrated foundations.—Monasterboyce, Glendalough and its nine churches.—Bangor, from which came Columbanus, the reformer of the Gauls, and Clonard, from which issued Columba, the apostle of Caledonia.

Ireland escapes the Rome of the Cæsars to be conquered by the Rome of the Popes.

Ireland, happier of old than Great Britain, escaped the Roman conquest. Agricola had dreamt of invading it, and even of holding it with a single legion; by such a means he would, according to the words of his son-in-law, have riveted the irons of Britain by depriving her of the dangerous sight and contagious neighbourhood of freedom.[1] But

[1] "Sæpe ex eo audivi, legione una et modicis auxiliis debellari obti-

this intention proved happily abortive. Saved from imperial proconsuls and prætors, the genius of the Celtic race found there a full development: it created for itself a language, a distinctive poetry, worship, and cultivation, and a social hierarchy; in one word, a system of civilisation equal and even superior to that of most other heathen nations. In the middle of the fifth century, Rome, Christian and Apostolic, extended its sceptre over the land which the Cæsars had not been able to reach, and St Patrick carried to it the laws of Christianity.[1] Of British origin, but imbued, like his contemporaries Ninian and Palladius, the apostles of the southern Picts and Scots, with the doctrines and usages of Rome,[2] the great apostle of the Celts of Ireland left the shores of Cambria to convert the neighbouring island. He was accompanied and followed by a crowd of Welsh or British monks, who hurried after him, driven to Ireland, as their brothers had been to Armorica, either by terror of the Saxon invasion or by the thirst of conquering souls to the truth.[3]

nerique Hiberniam posse: idque etiam adversus Britanniam profuturum, si Romana ubique arma, et velut e conspectu libertas tolleretur."—TACIT., *Agricola*, c. 24.

[1] See vol. ii. book vii. p. 385, the narrative of the conversion of Ireland by St Patrick.

[2] "Romanis eruditus disciplinis."—*Vit. S. David.*, ap. REES, p. 41.

[3] One of the British assistants of Patrick was a St Mochta, whose legend has been published by the Bollandists, in their vol. iii. August, p. 736. In this legend the mother of Mochta is represented as the servant of a British Druid. The foundation of many monasteries is attributed to him, and the evidently fabulous number of a hundred bishops

These British missionaries furnished Patrick with the thirty first bishops of the Church of Ireland,[1] who, in the exercise of their office, substituted or added certain rites and usages, purely British, to those which Patrick had brought from Rome. Ireland was converted, but she was converted according to the model of Britain[2]—profoundly and unchangeably Catholic in doctrine, but separated from Rome by various points of discipline and liturgy, without any real importance, which, from the narratives that remain to us of the life of St Patrick, it would be impossible to define. Even in the lifetime of Patrick, might there not have been differences between him and his British fellow-labourers on these points? This seems probable, from certain particulars in his history and writings,—as, for example, that passage in his Confession where he

Differences between St Patrick and his British assistants.

and three hundred priests as his disciples; but the legend is specially curious as showing a kind of testamentary brotherhood between Patrick and Mochta. "Tunc Mocteus ait: Si ante te de hac luce emigravero, familiam meam tibi committo. At Patricius ait: Et ego tibi meam commendo, si te ad Dominum præcessero; et factum est ita."

[1] "Viros multos litteratos et religiosos . . . e quibus triginta in episcopatus officiis principum sublimavit."—JOCELIN, ap. Bolland., vol. ii. *Martii*, p. 559. It is not necessary to suppose that these bishops had actual dioceses, and a jurisdiction perfectly established, as at a later period. We shall have occasion often to repeat that the bishops of the Celtic churches had scarcely any other functions than those of ordination and transmission of the priestly character. The power of the chiefs of great monastic establishments, who besides often became bishops, was of a very different description. The constitution of dioceses and parishes, in Ireland as in Scotland, does not go further back than to the twelfth century.

[2] This has been learnedly proved and put beyond doubt by M. Varin, in the papers already quoted.

says that he had brought the Gospel to Ireland in spite of his *seniors*—that is to say, according to Tillemont, in spite of the British priests. In the obscure and perhaps altered texts of the two Canons of Council which are attributed to him, certain acts which show a violent hostility to the British clergy and monks will be remarked with surprise.[1] The Cambrian legend, on the other hand, expressly points out, among the companions of Patrick, a Welsh monk, Carantoc or Carranog, whom it describes as "a strong knight under the sun," and a "herald of the celestial kingdom;" but takes care to add that, in consequence of the multitude of clerks who accompanied them, the two agreed to separate, and turned one to the right and the other to the left.[2] A still more curious passage of the *Amhra*, or panegyric in Irish verse, addressed to St Patrick by a monastic bard, may throw a ray of light upon the sentiments which separated that truly apostolic leader from the Welsh monks, who were too often distinguished by their exclusive and jealous spirit. Always faithful to the prevailing sentiment of the Roman Church, which regarded the conversion of a sinner as a greater miracle than resurrection from the

[1] "Clericus qui de Britannia ad nos venit sine epistola (episcopi?) et si habitet in plebe, non licitum ministrare."—Can. 33 du 1er synode. "Cum monachis non est docendum, quorum malum est inauditum qui unitatem vero plebis non incongrue suscepimus."—Can. 20 du 2e synode. *Concilia*, ed. Coletti, vol. iv. pp. 756, 760.

[2] "Sub præsentia solis, fortis miles, mirabilis, spiritalis, summus abbas, longanimus, præceptor fidelitatis . . . præco regni cœlestis."—*Vita S. Carant.*, ap. Rees, p. 98. Compare the legend cited by M. Varin, *op. cit.*

dead,[1] the saint is applauded by his panegyrist for having taught the Gospel always without distinction, without difference of caste, even to strangers, barbarians, and Picts.[2]

Whatever these discussions were, however, they did no hurt either to the Catholic faith — for Pelagianism, the leading heresy in Britain, never had any ground to stand on in Ireland[3]—nor to the influence of the great Roman missionary, who has continued the first and most popular saint in Catholic Ireland. The gratitude of the kings and people whom he had converted showed itself in such lavish generosity, that, according to the Irish saying, had he accepted all that was offered him, he would not have left for the saints that came after as much as would have fed two horses.[4] Nothing is more certainly proved than the subordination of the new-born Irish Church to the Roman See—a subordination which was decided and regulated by Patrick.[5] But it is not less certain that Welsh and Breton monks were the fellow-workers, and, above all, the successors of Patrick in Ireland;

[1] "Majus est miraculum verbo peccatorem convertere quam carne mortuum resuscitare."—GREGORIUS, *De Vita et Mirac. Patrum*, lib. iv c. 36.

[2] LA VILLEMARQUÉ, *Poésie des Cloîtres Celtiques.*

[3] This is clearly shown by LANIGAN, vol. ii. p. 410-15 (*Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*), notwithstanding the affirmation to the contrary of the venerable Bede, l. ii. c. 19.

[4] LYNCH, *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. ii. p. 11, ed. Kelly.

[5] "Item quæcumque caussa valde difficilis exorta fuerit atque ignota cunctis Scotorum gentium judicibus, ad cathedram archiepiscopi Hibernienšium, id est Patricii atque hujus antistitis examinationem recte referenda.

"Si vero in illa cum suis sapientibus facile sanari non poterit talis

that they completed his work, and that the Church of the island was organised and developed under their influence, thanks to the continual emigration which took place from Wales to Ireland and from Ireland to Wales, proofs of which are to be found on every page of the annals of those times.

Connection of St David and his disciples with Ireland.

It is to the influence of St David, the great monk-bishop of Wales, that the history of the two Churches attributes the principal share in the close union of Irish and Welsh monasticism. We have already said that the episcopal monastery which has retained his name is situated on a promontory which projects from the coast of Great Britain as if to throw itself towards Ireland. The legend narrates that Patrick, while standing on this promontory at a despondent moment, overwhelmed by vexation and discouragement, was consoled by a vision in which there was revealed to him, at one glance, the whole extent of the great island which God had reserved for him to convert and save.[1] David, born of an Irish

caussa prædicta negotiationis, ad sedem apostolicam decrevimus esse mittendam, id est ad Petri apostoli cathedram, auctoritatem Romæ urbis habentem.

"Hi sunt qui de hoc decreverunt, id est Auxilius, Patricius, Secundinus, Benignus. Post vero exitum Patricii sancti, alumpni sui valde ejusdem libros conscripserunt."—Canon drawn from MS. in Armagh, which is believed to be written by Patrick's own hand, and is published by O'Curry (*Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Irish History*, p. 611). All the discoveries of contemporary archæology and theology confirm the union of the primitive Church of Ireland with the Church of Rome.

[1] "Ex loco in quo stabat, qui modo sedes Patricii dicitur, totam prospexit insulam."—*Vita S. David.*, p. 119.

mother,[1] died in the arms of one of his Irish disciples. Another of his disciples was long celebrated for the service he rendered to Ireland by introducing there the culture of bees. For there, as everywhere, the monastic missionaries brought with them not only faith, truth, and virtue, but, at the same time, the inferior but essential benefits of cultivation, labour, and the arts.

The monk Modonnoc introduces bees into Ireland.

Modonnoc, the monk in question, was a rough labourer, so rugged and intent upon keeping all at work, that he escaped narrowly on one occasion from having his head broken by the axe of a comrade whom he had reproached for his idleness when the two were working together to soften the slope of a road excavated near St David's monastery.[2] Towards the end of his days, after a long life of obedience and humility, he embarked for Ireland. All the bees of St David's followed him. It was vain that he turned back his boat, on the prow of which they had settled, to the shore, and denounced the fugitives to his superior. Three times in succession he attempted to free himself from his strange companions, and had at last to

[1] Bolland., vol. i. Martii, p. 39.

[2] "Cum fratribus viam prope civitatis confinia in proclivio cavabat, quo ad deferenda necessitatum onera viantibus facilior fieret accessus. Quid tu tam desidiose et segniter laboras? At ille . . . ferrum quod manu tenebat, id est bipennem in altum elevans, in cervice eum ferire conatus est."—Ap. Rees, p. 133. In this legend the monastery is always entitled *civitas*, which thoroughly answers to the idea of the social and industrial community of which, at that period, a cenobitical establishment was formed.

resign himself to the necessity of carrying them with him into Ireland, where up to this time they were unknown. By this graceful little story the legend enshrines in Christian gratitude the recollection of the laborious disciple who was the first to introduce the culture of bees into Ireland, where it spread rapidly, and became a source of wealth to the country. It is pleasant to find, in the same legend, that the aged emigrant took special pains, in gathering his honey, to procure a more delicate food than their ordinary coarse fare, for the poor.[1]

Monastic development of Ireland under the influence of the Cambrian monks.

Thanks to this incessant emigration, Ireland, from the fifth to the eighth century, became one of the principal centres of Christianity in the world; and not only of Christian holiness and virtue, but also of knowledge, literature, and that intellectual civilisation with which the new faith was about to endow Europe, then delivered from heathenism and from the Roman empire. This golden age presented two remarkable phenomena: the temporary predominance for one or two centuries of certain rites and customs proper to the British Church, and the extraordinary development of monastic institutions. As to the British pecu-

[1] "Cuncta apum multitudo eum secuta est, secumque in navi ubi insederat collocavit in prora navis. . . . Alveariis ad nutriendos examinum fetus operam dedit quo indigentibus aliqua suavioris cibi oblectamenta procuraret. . . . Hibernia autem in qua nunquam usque ad illud tempus apes vivere poterant, nimia mellis fertilitate dotatur."—Ap. Rees, p. 134. Colgan, however (*Act. SS. Hiberniæ*, 13th February), affirms that they already existed in Ireland.

liarities, in proportion as they become apparent under Patrick's successors, it becomes clear that they differ from Roman usages only upon a few points of no real importance, although at that moment they seemed weighty enough. They vary from Catholic rule only in respect to the right day for the feast of Easter, the form and size of the monastic tonsure, and the ceremonies of baptism[1] —questions which in no way involve any point of doctrine. Nor do they impugn the authority of the Holy See in respect to matters of faith; and it is impossible to support, by facts or authentic documents, those doubts as to the orthodoxy of the Irish, which have been borrowed from the unsatisfactory and partial learning of English writers of the past century by various authors of our own day — such as Rettberg and Augustin Thierry: that orthodoxy was then, what it has always continued, irreproachable.

The British peculiarities do not interfere with doctrine.

The Catholic — the Roman — faith reigned thus without limitation in the great and numberless communities which constituted the chief strength of the Church founded by Patrick and his British fellow-labourers. This Church had been at its very origin clothed with an almost exclusively monastic

[1] A learned Englishman of our own day, Dr Todd, in his *Monograph on St Patrick*, published in 1863, acknowledges that the Irish Church of the sixth century differed in nothing as to doctrine from the rest of the Catholic Church; but at the same time he maintains her independence of the Holy See. See upon this question an excellent article in the *Home and Foreign Review*, for January 1864.

character. Episcopal succession remained long unknown or confused; the authority of bishops, deprived of all local jurisdiction, was subordinated to that of the abbots, even when the latter did not share the episcopal rank. Patrick had converted a crowd of petty princes, chiefs of tribes or clans; indeed, all the primitive saints of Ireland were connected with reigning families, and almost all the converted chiefs embraced monastic life. Their families, their clansmen, their dependants, followed their example. A prince, in becoming a monk, naturally became also an abbot, and in his monastic life continued, as he had been in his worldly existence, the chief of his race and of his clan.

The first great monasteries of Ireland were then nothing else, to speak simply, than clans reorganised under a religious form. From this cause resulted the extraordinary number of their inhabitants, who were counted by hundreds and thousands;[1] from this also came their influence and productiveness, which were still more wonderful. In these vast monastic cities, that fidelity to the Church which Ireland has maintained with heroic constancy for fourteen centuries, in face of all the excesses, as well as all the refinements, of persecution, took permanent root. There also were trained an entire population of philosophers, of writers, of architects, of carvers, of painters, of caligraphers, of musicians,

[1] The number of three thousand monks is constantly met with in the records of the great monasteries.

poets, and historians; but, above all, of missionaries and preachers, destined to spread the light of the Gospel and of Christian education, not only in all the Celtic countries, of which Ireland was always the nursing mother, but throughout Europe, among all the Teutonic races—among the Franks and Burgundians, who were already masters of Gaul, as well as amid the dwellers by the Rhine and Danube, and up to the frontiers of Italy. Thus sprang up also those armies of saints, who were more numerous, more national, more popular, and, it must be added, more extraordinary, in Ireland, than in any other Christian land.

It is well known that the unanimous testimony of Christendom conferred upon Ireland at this period the name of *Isle of Saints;*[1] but it is much less known that these saints were all, or almost all, attached to monastic institutions, which retained a discipline and regularity, steady but strangely allied to the violence and eccentricity of the national character. The ancient relics of Irish tradition show them to us classified, and as if ranged in line of battle, in three orders or battalions, by the poetic and warlike imagination of the Celt: the first, commanded by St Patrick, was composed exclusively of bishops—Roman, Briton, Frankish, or Scotic[2]— The three orders of saints.

[1] "Hibernia, insula sanctorum, sanctis et mirabilibus perplurimis sublimiter plena habetur."—MARIANUS SCOTUS, *Chron.* ad. ann. 696 (A.D. 589), ap. PERTZ, *Monumenta*, vol. vii. p. 544.

[2] The word Scotic, though an awkward one, is made use of here and elsewhere to distinguish the Scots of Ireland from the more modern

and shone like the sun; the second, commanded by St Columba, and composed of priests, shone like the moon; and the third, under the orders of Colman and Aidan, was composed at once of bishops, priests, and hermits, and shone like the stars.[1] Let us point out, in passing, in this beatific crowd the famous travellers and the sailor-monks. Such was Brendan, whose fantastic pilgrimages into the great ocean, in search of the earthly Paradise, and of souls to convert, and unknown lands to discover, have been preserved under the form of visions, which are always wonderfully penetrated by the spirit of God and of theological truth.[2] In thus putting imagination, as well as the spirit of adventure, at the service of the faith and ideal Christian virtue, these visions are worthy of being reckoned among the poetic sources of the *Divina Commedia*.[3] They exercised a lively influence upon the Christian imagination during all the middle ages, and even up to the time of Christopher Columbus himself, to whom the salt-water epic of St Brendan seems to have pointed out the way to America.[4]

Scottish race which has since identified the name with Scotland alone.—*Translator's note.*

[1] Ussher, *Antiquities*, pp. 473, 490, 913. The very learned Anglican primate was aided in his researches into the history and archæology of Ireland by David Rooth, the Catholic bishop of Ossory, to whom he publicly avows his gratitude in various parts of his works.—See also Lanigan, vol. i. p. 5; vol. ii. p. 13.

[2] La Villemarqué, *op. cit.*

[3] Ozanam, *Œuvres*, vol. v. p. 373.

[4] "I am convinced," he said, "that the terrestrial paradise is in the island of St Brendan, which nobody can reach except by the will of

By the side of this monkish traveller, let us instance as a type of the religious who remained in Ireland to fertilise it by their labours, a monk-bishop called Dega or Dagan, who passed his nights in transcribing manuscripts, and his days in reading, and carving in iron and copper. He was so laborious that the construction of three hundred bells and three hundred crosiers of bishops or abbots, is attributed to him, and the transcription of three hundred copies of the Gospels. "I thank my God," he said, while preaching to the monks of Bangor, "that He has made me recognise among you the three orders of monks which I have already seen elsewhere—those who are angels for purity, those who are apostles for activity, and those who would be martyrs, were it needed, by their readiness to shed their blood for Christ."[1]

Dega, monk, bishop, an artist. † 586.

At that period, as ever since, the love and practice of music was a national passion with the Irish. The missionaries and the monks, their successors, were also inspired by this passion, and knew how to use it for the government and consolation of souls. Another pleasant legend depicts to us its influence, in

Legend of St Mochuda, 580.

God."—Quoted by M. Ferdinand Denis, *Le Monde Enchanté*, p. 130. There were two saints of the name of Brendan: the best known, founder of the Monastery of Clonfert, and celebrated for his voyages, died in 577.

[1] "Hic Dagæus fuit faber tam in ferro quam in ære, et scriba insignis. . . . Gratias ago Deo meo quod S. Moctei postremo similes conventus vos video, tria quippe monachorum genera sibi succedentia habuit: primum puritate angelicum, secundum actibus apostolicum, tertium, ut sancti martyres, sanguinem pro Christo effundere promptum."—Bolland., vol. iii. Augusti, pp. 657, 658.

the form of ecclesiastical chants, upon an Irish youth. Mochuda, the son of a great lord of Kerry, kept, like David, his father's flocks in the great forests which then covered a district now almost altogether without wood. He attracted, by his piety and grace, the regard of the duke or prince of the province, who called him often in the evening to his presence to converse with him, while his wife, who was the daughter of the King of Munster, showed the same affection for the young shepherd. In the wood where his swine fed, there passed one day a bishop with his suite, chanting psalms in alternate strophes as they continued their course. The young Mochuda was so rapt by this psalmody that he abandoned his flock, and followed the choir of singers to the gates of the monastery where they were to pass the night. He did not venture to enter with them, but remained outside, close to the place where they lay, and where he could hear them continue their song till the hour of repose, the bishop chanting longest of all after the others were asleep. The shepherd thus passed the entire night. The chief who loved him sought him everywhere, and when at last the young man was brought to him, asked why he had not come, as usual, on the previous evening. "My lord," said the shepherd, "I did not come because I was ravished by the divine song which I have heard sung by the holy clergy; please Heaven, lord duke, that I was but with them, that I might learn to sing as they do." The chief in vain admitted him

to his table, offered him his sword, his buckler, his lance, all the tokens of a stirring and prosperous life. "I want none of your gifts," the shepherd always replied; "I want but one thing—to learn the chant which I have heard sung by the saints of God." In the end he prevailed, and was sent to the bishop to be made a monk. The legend adds that thirty beautiful young girls loved him openly; for he was handsome and agreeable: but the servant of God having prayed that their love should become spiritual love, they were all, like himself, converted, and consecrated themselves to God in isolated cells, which remained under his authority, when he had in his turn become a bishop, and founder of the great monastic city of Lismore.[1]

This preponderance of the monastic element in the Irish Church—which was due to the fact that the first apostles of the isle were monks, and was at the same time thoroughly justified by the adventurous zeal of their successors—maintained itself

[1] "Ait dux: Veni huc quotidie cum aliis subulcis. . . . Aliquando sues pascebat in silvis, aliquando manebat in castellis cum duce. . . . Canebat episcopus cum comitibus suis psalmos invicem per viam. . . . Ideo ad te non veni, domine mi, quia delectavit me divinum carmen, quod audivi a cunctis choris, et nusquam audivi simile huic carmini. . . . Nolo aliquid de donis tuis carnalibus, sed volo vere ut carmen quod a sanctis Dei audivi discam. . . . S. Mochuda speciosus erat, et in juventute sua triginta juvenculæ virgines amaverunt eum magno amore carnali, hoc non celantes. Famulus autem Dei rogavit pro eis, ut carnalem amorem mutarent in spiritualem; quod ita est factum; illæ enim virgines seipsas cum suis cellis Deo et S. Mochudæ obtulerunt."—*Acta SS.* Bolland., vol. iii. Maii, p. 379. Mochuda is better known under the name of Cartagh, which was that of the bishop whose disciple he became, and whose name he adopted out of affection for his spiritual father. He died in 637.

not only during all the flourishing period of the Church's history, but even as long as the nation continued independent. Even the Anglo-Norman conquerors of the twelfth century, though they too came from a country where most of the bishops had been monks, and where almost all the sees had begun by being monasteries, were struck by this distinguishing characteristic of Irish Christianity.[1]

Celebrated monasteries of the sixth century in Ireland.

Of all these celebrated communities of the sixth century, which were the most numerous ever seen in Christendom, there remain only vague associations connected with certain sites, whose names betray their monastic origin—or a few ruins visited by unfrequent travellers. Let us instance, for example, Monasterevan, founded in 504, upon the banks of the Barrow; Monasterboyce,[2] a great lay and ecclesiastical school in the valley of the Boyne; Innis-

[1] "Nam monachi erant maxime qui ad prædicandum venerant."—Bede, l. iii. c. 3. "Cum fere omnes Hiberniæ prælati de monasteriis in clerum electi sunt, quæ monachi sunt, sollicite complent omnia, quæ vero clerici vel prælati, fere prætermittunt universa."—Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topographia Hiberniæ*, dist. iii. c. 29.

[2] Founded by St Builhe, who died in 621. M. Henri Martin, in his interesting pamphlet entitled *Antiquités Irlandaises*, 1863, has given an animated picture of Monasterboyce and of that "burying-ground in which there rises a round tower a hundred and ten feet high, of the most graceful poise, and the boldest and finest form. Around it are the ruins of two churches and two magnificent stone crosses; the highest of these crosses is twenty-seven feet in height, covered with Gaelic ornaments and inscriptions. These latter alone repay the journey, for there exists nothing like them on the Continent. As a specimen of Gaelic Christian art, there is nothing comparable to Monasterboyce." M. Martin also remarks, at a distance of three miles, the graceful ruins of Mellifont: "In the depths of a valley, by the banks of a brook, with a church of the ogival period, . . . and, at some steps from the church, a *rotonda* (or chapter-house) with Roman arcades of the purest style." Mellifont was

fallen, in the picturesque Lake of Killarney; and, above all, Glendalough, in the valley of the two lakes, with its nine ruined churches, its round tower, and its vast cemetery, a sort of pontifical and monastic necropolis, founded in the midst of a wild and desolate landscape, by St Kevin, one of the first successors of Patrick, and one of those who, to quote the Irish hagiographers, counted by millions the souls whom they led to heaven.[1] Among these sanctuaries there are two which must be pointed out to the attention of the reader, less because of their population and celebrity, than because they have produced the two most remarkable Celtic monks of whom we have to speak.

Clonard, founded by St Finnian.

These are Clonard and Bangor, both of which reckoned three thousand monks. The one was founded by St Finnian, who was also venerated as the celestial guide of innumerable souls.[2] He was born in Ireland, but educated by David and other monks in Britain, where he spent thirty years. He then returned to his native country to create the great monastic school of Clonard, from which, says the historian,[3] saints came out in as great number as Greeks of old from the sides of the horse of Troy.

Bangor, founded by St Comgall, 559.

The other, the third Bangor—glorious rival of the two monasteries of the same name in Cambria—

a Cistercian abbey, founded by a community from Clairvaux, whom St Bernard sent to his friend St Malachi in 1135.

[1] "Multarum millium animarum duces."

[2] "Innumeras ad patriam animas cœlestem ducens."

[3] USSHER, *Antiquities*, p. 622.

was founded upon the shores of the Irish sea facing Britain,[1] by Comgall, who was descended from a reigning family of Irish Picts, but who had, like Patrick, Finnian, and so many others, lived in Britain. He gave a rule, written in Irish verse, to this community, the fame of which was to eclipse that of all other Irish monasteries in the estimation of Europe, and whose three thousand friars, divided into seven alternate choirs, each composed of three hundred singers, chanted the praises of God day and night, to call down His grace upon their Church and their country.

Columbanus, reformer of the Gauls, produced by Bangor.

It was Bangor that produced, as we have already seen, the great St Columbanus, whose glorious life was passed far from Ireland, who sowed the seed of so many great and holy deeds between the Vosges and the Alps, between the banks of the Loire and those of the Danube, and whose bold genius having by turns startled the Franks, the Burgundians, and the Lombards, disputed the future supremacy over the monastic world for half a century with the rule of St Benedict. And it is from Clonard that we now await another great saint of the same name, who, restoring and extending the work of Ninian and Palladius, was to conquer Caledonia to the Christian faith, and whose sons at the destined moment were, if not to begin, at least to accomplish and complete the difficult conversion of the Anglo-Saxons.

Columba, the apostle of Caledonia, produced by Clonard.

[1] It is now only a village on the shore of the Bay of Belfast, without the slightest vestige of the famous monastery.

BOOK IX.

ST COLUMBA, THE APOSTLE OF CALEDONIA, 521-597.

"I send thee unto the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified."—Acts xxvi. 18.

CHAPTER I.

THE YOUTH OF COLUMBA AND HIS MONASTIC LIFE IN IRELAND.

The biographers of Columba.—His different names.—His royal origin.—The supreme kings of Ireland: the O'Neills and O'Donnells; Red Hugh.—Birth of Columba; vision of his mother.—His monastic education; jealousy of his comrades; Kieran; the two Finnians; the school of Clonard.—Vision of the guardian angel and the three brides.—The assassin of a virgin struck by death at the prayer of Columba.—His youthful influence in Ireland; his monastic foundations, especially at Durrow and at Derry; his song in honour of Derry.—His love for poetry; his connection with the travelling bards.—He was himself a poet, a great traveller, and of a quarrelsome disposition.—His passion for manuscripts.—Longarad of the hairy legs and his bag of books.—Dispute about the Psalter of Finnian; judgment of King Diarmid, founder of Clonmacnoise.—Protest of Columba; he takes to flight, chanting the *Hymn of Confidence*, and raises a civil war.—Battle of Cul-Dreimhne; the *Cathac* or Psalter of battle.—Synod of Teltown; Columba is excommunicated.—St Brendan takes part with Columba, who consults several hermits, and among others Abban, in the Cell of Tears.—The last of his advisers, Molaise, condemns him to exile.—Twelve of his disciples follow him; devotion of the young Mochonna.—Contradictory reports concerning the first forty years of his life.

The biographers of Columba.

St Columba, the apostle and monastic hero of Caledonia, has had the good fortune to have his history written by another monk, almost a contemporary of his own, whose biography of him is as delightful as it is edifying. This biographer, Adam-

nan, was the ninth successor of Columba as abbot of his principal establishment at Iona, and in addition was related to him. Born only a quarter of a century later, he had seen in his childhood the actual companions of Columba and those who had received his last breath.[1] He wrote at the very fountainhead, on the spot where his glorious predecessor had dictated his last words, surrounded by scenes and recollections which still bore the trace of his presence, or were connected with the incidents of his life. A still earlier narrative, written by another abbot of Iona,[2] and reproduced almost word for word by Adamnan, forms the basis of his work, which he has completed by a multitude of anecdotes and testimonies collected with scrupulous care, and which altogether, though unfortunately without chronological order, forms one of the most living, attractive, and authentic relics of Christian history.[3]

[1] "Ut ab aliquibus, qui præsentes inerant, didicimus."—ADAMNAN, lib. iii. c. 23.

[2] By Comyn the Fair (*Cummeneus Albus*), the seventh bishop of Iona, 657 to 669. This narrative was first published by Colgan in the *Trias Thaumaturga*, afterwards in the first volume of the *Acta Sanctorum ordinis S. Benedicti*, and finally by the Bollandists, vol. ii. June.

[3] Adamnan, who was born in 624, must have written the biography of St Columba between 690 and 703, a period at which he gave up the liturgical traditions of the Scots and the direction of the Monastery of Iona to settle near the Anglo-Saxon king of Northumbria, Aldfrid (VARIN, *Premier Mémoire*, p. 172). Adamnan's work was first published by Canisius in his *Thesaurus Antiquitatum* in 1604; afterwards with four other biographies of the same saint by the Franciscan Colgan, in his *Trias Thaumaturga* (Louvain, 1647); by the Bollandists in 1698; and finally by Pinkerton, a Scotch antiquary of the last century. It has just been reprinted, after a MS. of the eighth century, by the Rev. Dr W. Reeves, for the Celtic Archæological Society of Dublin, with maps, glossary, and

Like twenty other saints of the Irish calendar, Columba bore a symbolical name borrowed from the Latin, a name which signified the dove of the Holy Ghost, and which was soon to be rendered illustrious by his countryman Columbanus, the celebrated founder of Luxeuil, with whom many modern historians have confounded him.[1] To distinguish the one from the other, and to indicate specially the greatest Celtic missionary of the British Isles, we shall adopt, from the different versions of his name, that of Columba. His countrymen have almost always named him *Columb-Kill* or *Cille*, that is to say, the *dove of the cell*, thus adding to his primitive name a special designation, intended to recall either the essentially monastic character of the saint, or the great number of communities founded and governed by him.[2] He was a scion of one of those great Irish races, of whom it is literally true to say that they lose themselves in the night of ages, but which have retained to our own day, thanks to the tenacious attachment of the Irish people to their national recollections, through all the vicissitudes of

His different names.

His royal origin.

appendix ; Dublin, 1857. This excellent publication, which is distinguished by an impartiality too rare among learned English authors, has rendered a considerable service both to the hagiography and to the national history of Ireland and Scotland.

[1] Among others, Camden, in the sixteenth century ; Fleury at certain points (book xxxix. c. 36) ; and Augustin Thierry, in the first editions of his *Histoire de la Conquête d'Angleterre*.

[2] "Qui videlicet Columba nunc a nonnullis, composito a cella et columba nomine, Columcelli vocatur."—Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, v. 9. "Eo quod multarum cellarum, id est, monasteriorum vel ecclesiarum institutor, fundator et rector fuit."—Notker Balbulus, *Martyrol.*, 9 Jun.

conquest, persecution, and exile, a rank more patriotic and popular than that of mere nobility or aristocratic lineage. This was the great race of the Nialls or O'Donnells[1] (*clan Domhnaill*), which, native to and master of all the north-western part of the island (the modern counties of Tyrconnell, Tyrone, and Donegal), held sovereign sway in Hibernia and Caledonia, over the two shores of the Scottish sea, during the sixth century. Almost without interruption, up to 1168, kings, springing from its different branches, exercised in Ireland the supreme monarchy—that is to say, a sort of primacy over the provincial kings, which has been compared to that of metropolitan over bishops, but which rather recalls the feudal sovereignty of the Salic emperors, or of the kings of the family of Capet over the great vassals of Germany and France, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Nothing could be more unsettled or stormy than the exercise of this sovereignty. It was incessantly disputed by some vassal king, who generally succeeded by force

The monarchs or supreme kings of Ireland.

[1] There is a history of the saint in Irish by Magnus O'Donnell, who describes himself as prince of Tyrconnell. It was put together in 1532, and the original MS. is to be found in the Bodleian. It is a legendary compilation, founded upon the narrative of Adamnan, but augmented by a crowd of fabulous legends, though at the same time by important Irish traditions and historical details in honour of the race of O'Donnell, which was that of the saint and of the historian. It has been abridged, translated into Latin, and published by Colgan in the *Triades Thaumaturgæ*. This volume is the second of the author's collected works, entitled *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ, seu sacræ ejusdem insulæ antiquitates*, which he was not able to finish, and which unfortunately includes only the saints of the first three months of the year. I have found a copy of this very rare collection in only one of all the Paris libraries, that of St Geneviève.

of arms in robbing the supreme monarch of his crown and his life, and replacing him upon the throne of Tara, with a tolerable certainty of being himself similarly treated by the son of the dethroned prince.[1] Besides, the right of succession in Ireland was not regulated by the law of primogeniture. According to the custom known under the name of *Tanistry*, the eldest blood-relation succeeded every deceased prince or chief, and the brother in consequence preceded the son in the order of succession.

The O'Neills and O'Donnells.

After the English conquest, the warlike and powerful race of Nialls was able to maintain, by dint of dauntless perseverance, a sort of independent sovereignty in the north-west of Ireland. The names of the O'Neills and O'Donnells, chiefs of its two principal branches, and too often at war with each other, are to be found on every page of the annals of unhappy Ireland. After the Reformation, when religious persecution had come in to aggravate all the evils of the conquest, these two houses supplied their indignant and unsubdued country with a succession of heroic soldiers who struggled to the death against the perfidious and sanguinary

[1] Let us recall in this connection the very ancient division of Ireland into four provinces or kingdoms :—to the north, Ulster or Ultonia; the south, Munster or Mommonia; to the east, Leinster or Lagenia; the west, Connaught or Connocia. A distinct district, the antique Sacr Middle of Ireland, represented by the counties of Meath and Westmeath, surrounded the royal residence of Tara, celebrated in Moore's melodies, and some ruins of which still remain. This district was exclusively dependent on the supreme monarch. See the map annexed to this volume

despotism of the Tudors and Stuarts. Ten centuries passed in such desperate struggles have not weakened the traditions which link the saint whose history we are about to tell to those champions of an ancient faith and an outraged country. Even under the reign of Elizabeth, the vassals of young Hugh O'Donnell, called Red Hugh,[1] so renowned in the poetical records and popular traditions of Erin, and the most dangerous antagonist of English tyranny, recognised in him the hero indicated in the prophetic songs of Columb-kill, and thus placed his glory and that of his ancestors under the wing of the *dove of the cells*, as under a patronage at once domestic and celestial.[2]

[1] Taken prisoner by the English in his cradle, he died at the age of twenty-nine, in 1602, at Simancas, where he had gone to seek aid from Spain. His brother, the heir of his power in Ireland, also died in exile in Rome, where his tomb may still be seen in San Pietro in Montorio.

[2] Reeves, *Adamnan*, p. 34. O'Curry, *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*, 1861, p. 328. The eight great races of Ireland, sung by the bards and celebrated in the national history, are these :—

O'Neill and O'Donnell,	in the north.	O'Moore and O'Byrne,	in the east.
O'Brien and M'Carthy,	in the south.	O'Connor and O'Rourke,	in the west.

The principality of Tyrconnell, confiscated by James I., contained 1,165,000 acres. "I would rather," said the most illustrious of the O'Neills in 1597, "be O'Neill of Ulster than king of Spain." Nevertheless the chiefs of these two great races are generally described by the annalists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as earls of Tyrconnell, a title which had been conferred upon them by the English crown in the hope of gaining them over. The articles upon the O'Neills and O'Donnells in Sir Bernard Burke's interesting work, *Vicissitudes of Families*,

The father of Columba was descended from one of the eight sons of the great king Niall of the Nine Hostages,[1] who was supreme monarch of all Ireland from 379 to 405, at the period when Patrick was brought to the island as a slave. Consequently he sprang from a race which had reigned in Ireland for six centuries; and in virtue of the ordinary law of succession, might himself have been called to the throne.[2] His mother belonged to a reigning family in Leinster, one of the four subordinate kingdoms of the island. He was born at Gartan, in one of the wildest districts of the present county of Donegal—where the slab of stone upon which his mother lay at the moment of his birth is still shown. He who passes a night upon that stone is cured for ever from the pangs of nostalgia, and will never be consumed, while absent or in exile, by a too passionate love for his country. Such at least is the belief of the poor Irish emigrants, who flock thither at the moment when they are about to abandon the confiscated and ravaged soil of their country to seek their living in America, moved by a touching recollection of the great missionary who gave up his native land for the love of God and human souls.

The kindred of Columba.

His birth. 7th December 521.

should be read on this subject. The posterity of the O'Donnells still flourishes in an elevated position in Austria.

[1] Because he had received nine hostages from a king whom he had conquered.

[2] An ancient life of the saint, in Irish, quoted by Dr Reeves, p. 269, expressly states this fact, and adds that he gave up his right to the throne only for the love of God.

Before his birth, his mother had a dream, which posterity has accepted as a graceful and poetical symbol of her son's career. An angel appeared to her, bringing her a veil covered with flowers of wonderful beauty, and the sweetest variety of colours; immediately after she saw the veil carried away by the wind, and rolling out as it fled over plains, woods, and mountains: then the angel said to her, "Thou art about to become the mother of a son, who shall blossom for heaven, who shall be reckoned among the prophets of God, and who shall lead numberless souls to the heavenly country."[1] This spiritual power, this privilege of leading souls to heaven, was recognised by the Irish people, converted by St Patrick, as the greatest glory which its princes and great men could gain.

Education of Columba.

The Irish legends, which are always distinguished, even amidst the wildest vagaries of fancy, by a high and pure morality, linger lovingly upon the childhood and youth of the predestined saint. They tell us how, confided in the first place to the care of the priest who had baptised him, and who gave him the first rudiments of literary education, he was accustomed from his earliest years to the heavenly visions which were to occupy so large a

[1] "Quoddam miræ pulchritudinis peplum detulit, in quo veluti universorum decorosi colores florum depicti videbantur. . . . Peplum a se elongari volando videbat, camporumque latitudinem in majus crescendo excedere, montesque et saltus majore sui mensura superare. . . . Talem filium editura es floridum, qui quasi unus prophetarum Dei inter ipsos connumerabitur, innumerabiliumque animarum dux ad cœlestem a Deo patriam est prædestinatus."—ADAMN., iii. 1.

place in his life. His guardian angel often appeared to him; and the child asked if all the angels in heaven were as young and shining as he. A little later Columba was invited by the same angel to choose among all the virtues those which he would like best to possess. "I choose," said the youth, "chastity and wisdom;" and immediately three young girls of wonderful beauty, but foreign air, appeared to him, and threw themselves on his neck to embrace him. The pious youth frowned, and repulsed them with indignation. "What!" they said; "then thou dost not know us?" "No, not the least in the world." "We are three sisters whom our father gives to thee to be thy brides." "Who, then, is your father?" "Our father is God, he is Jesus Christ, the Lord and Saviour of the world." "Ah, you have indeed an illustrious father. But what are your names?" "Our names are Virginity, Wisdom, and Prophecy; and we come to leave thee no more, to love thee with an incorruptible love."[1]

Vision of the three sisters.

From the house of the priest, Columba passed into the great monastic schools, which were not only a nursery for the clergy of the Irish Church, but

[1] "Ergo ne angeli omnes ita juvenili ætate floretis, ita splendide vestiti ornatique inceditis? . . . Age ergo, quid eligis ediscere. . . . Tres adstitere virgines admirandi decoris et peregrini vultus, quas statim in ejus amplexus et oscula improviso ruentes, pudicitiæ cultor contracta fronte . . . abigebat. Ergo ne nos non agnoscis quarum basia et amores viliter aspernas? . . . Prorsus quæ sitis ignoro. . . . Tres sumus sorores et sponsæ tibi nuper a patre nostro desponsatæ. . . . Ecquis vero est vester pater? . . . Magni estis profecto parentis filiæ; pergite, quæso, etiam nomina vestra recludere."—O'Donnell, *Vita quinta S. Columbæ*, i. 36, 37, 38, ap. Colgan, *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 394.

where also young laymen of all conditions were educated. Columba, like many others, there learned to make his first steps in that monastic life to which he had been drawn by the call of God. He devoted himself not only to study and prayer, but also to the manual toil then inseparable, in Ireland and everywhere else, from a religious profession. Like all his young companions, he had to grind overnight the corn for the next day's food: but when his turn came, it was so well and quickly done that his companions suspected him of having been assisted by an angel.[1] The royal birth of Columba procured him several distinctions in the schools which were not always to the satisfaction of his comrades. One of the latter, named Kieran, who was also destined to fill a great place in Scotic legend, became indignant at the ascendancy of Columba: but while the two students disputed, a celestial messenger came to Kieran and placed before him an auger, a plane, and an axe, saying, "Look at these tools, and recollect that these are all thou hast sacrificed for God, since thy father was only a carpenter; but Columba has sacrificed the sceptre of Ireland, which might have come to him by right of his birth and the grandeur of his race."[2]

Jealousy of his comrades.

[1] "Ordinariæ illis epulæ cibarius panis; labor vero in singulos per vices distributus, nocturna lucubratione grana emolere, ex quibus hujusmodi panis pro communi omnium victu conficeretur. Id labori cum Columbæ, quia contubernalis esset, sæpius obtigisset, prompte et humillime acceptavit."—O'Donnell, i. 42.

[2] "Delapsus e cœlo bonus genius . . . terebram, asciam et securim

We learn from authentic documents that Columba completed his monastic life under the direction of two holy abbots, both bearing the name of Finnian. The first, who was also a bishop, ordained him deacon, but seems to have had him for a shorter time under his authority than the second Finnian, who, himself trained by a disciple of St Patrick, had long lived in Cambria, near St David. Columba's first steps in life are thus connected with the two great monastic apostles of Ireland and Cambria, the patriarchs of the two Celtic races which up to this time had shown the most entire fidelity to the Christian faith, and the greatest predilection for monastic life. The abbot Finnian who ordained Columba priest, ruled at Clonard the monastery which he had founded, and of which we have already spoken—one of those immense conventual establishments which were to be found nowhere but among the Celts, and which recalled to recollection the monastic towns of the Thebaïd. He had made of his monastery one great school, which was filled with the Irish youth, then, as always, consumed by a thirst for religious instruction; and we again find here the favourite number, so often repeated by Celtic tradition, of three thousand pupils, all eager to

The two Finnians. Monastic school of Clonard.

Kierano præsentans. Hæcce, inquit, aliaque hujusmodi, quibus tuus pater carpentariam exercebat, pro Dei amore reliquisti. Columba vero Hiberniæ sceptrum avito suo et generis potentia sperandum antequam offerretur abrenuntiavit."—O'Donnell, i. 44.

receive the instructions of him who was called the Master of Saints.[1]

The assassin of a young girl falls dead before him.

While Columba studied at Clonard, being still only a deacon, an incident took place which has been proved by authentic testimony, and which fixed the general attention upon him by giving a first evidence of his supernatural and prophetic intuition. An old Christian bard (the bards were not all Christians), named Gemmaïn, had come to live near the Abbot Finnian, asking from him, in exchange for his poetry, the secret of fertilising the soil. Columba, who continued all his life a passionate admirer of the traditionary poetry of his nation, determined to join the school of the bard, and to share his labours and studies. The two were reading together out of doors, at a little distance from each other, when a young girl appeared in the distance pursued by a robber. At the sight of the old man the young fugitive made for him with all her remaining strength, hoping, no doubt, to find safety in the authority exercised throughout Ireland by the national poets. Gemmaïn, in great trouble, called his pupil to his aid to defend the unfortunate

[1] VARIN, *Deuxième Mémoire*, p. 47. "Magister sanctorum Hiberniæ, habuit in sua schola de Cluain-Evaird tria millia sanctorum."—*Martyrol. Dungal*, ap. MOORE, *History of Ireland*, vol. i. ch. 13. The holy abbot Finnian died in 549. The other Finnian, the first master of Columb-Kill, is also known under the name of Finnbar, and was abbot at Maghbile (Down), and died in 579. It is believed that he was St Fredianus (Frediano), bishop and patron of Lucca, where there is a fine and curious church under his invocation. Colgan has published the lives of both, 28th February and 18th March, *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ*. The two saints are frequently confounded.—Compare ADAMNAN, i. 1; ii. 1; iii. 4.

child, who was trying to hide herself under their long robes, when her pursuer reached the spot. Without taking any notice of her defenders, he struck her in the neck with his lance, and was making off, leaving her dead at their feet. The horrified old man turned to Columba. "How long," he said, "will God leave unpunished this crime which dishonours us?" "For this moment only," said Columba, "not longer; at this very hour, when the soul of this innocent creature ascends to heaven, the soul of the murderer shall go down to hell." At the instant, like Ananias at the words of Peter, the assassin fell dead. The news of this sudden punishment, the story goes, went over all Ireland, and spread the fame of the young Columba far and wide.[1]

His foundations in Ireland.

It is easy to perceive, by the importance of the monastic establishments which he had brought into being even before he had attained the age of manhood, that his influence must have been as precocious as it was considerable. Apart from the virtues of which his after life afforded so many examples, it may be supposed that his royal birth gave him

[1] "Carminator . . . habens secum carmen magnificum."—*Vita S. Finniani*, ap. COLGAN, *Acta SS.*, p. 395. "Senex perturbatus tali subitatione Columbam eminus legentem advocavit, ut ambo in quantum valuissent filiam a persequente defenderent. . . . Filiam sub vestimentis eorum jugulavit, et, relinquens jacentem mortuam super pedes eorum, abire cœpit. . . . Quanto, sancte puer Columba, hoc scelus temporis spatio inultum fieri judex justus patietur. . . . Eadem hora qua interfectæ ab eo filiæ anima ascendet ad cœlos, anima ipsius interfectoris descendet ad inferos."—ADAMNAN, ii. 25.

an irresistible ascendancy in a country where, since the introduction of Christianity, all the early saints, like the principal abbots, belonged to reigning families, and where the influence of blood and the worship of genealogy continue, even to this day, to a degree unknown in other lands. Springing, as has been said, from the same race as the monarch of all Ireland, and consequently himself eligible for the same high office, which was more frequently obtained by election or usurpation than inheritance—nephew or near cousin of the seven monarchs who successively wielded the supreme authority during his life—he was also related by ties of blood to almost all the provincial kings.[1] Thus we see him, during his whole career, treated on a footing of perfect intimacy and equality by all the princes of Ireland and of Caledonia, and exercising a sort of spiritual sway equal or superior to the authority of secular sovereigns.

Before he had reached the age of twenty-five he had presided over the creation of a crowd of monasteries. As many as thirty-seven in Ireland alone recognised him as their founder. The most ancient and important of these foundations were situated, as was formerly that of St Bridget at Kildare,[2] in vast oak-forests, from which they took their name. The first, Durrow (*Dair-mach, Roboreti campus*), where a cross and well bearing the name of Co-

[1] See the genealogical tables, Dr Reeves's Appendix.
[2] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 394.

lumba are still to be seen, was erected in the central region called the *umbilical*, or sacred middle of Ireland. The other, Derry (*Doire-chalgaich*, *Robor-etum Calgachi*), is situated in the northern part of the island, in Columba's native province, in the hollow of a bay of that sea which separates Ireland from Scotland. After having long been the seat of a great and rich Catholic bishopric, it became, under its modern name of Londonderry, one of the principal centres of English colonisation, and was, in 1690, the bulwark of the Protestant conquest against the powerless efforts of the last of the Stuart kings.[1] But nothing then indicated the possibility of those

[1] Dr Reeves gives in his Appendix G a detailed enumeration of the thirty-seven foundations of Columb-Kill in Ireland. In the north of the island, and in his native province, we remark the name of Raphoe, until lately the seat of a diocese, and Tory, in an isle of the coast of Donegal; in the central district Sord, now *Swords*, seven miles from Dublin, which has retained, like Tory, its *round tower;* and Kells, which gained celebrity only in 807 as the refuge of the monks driven from Iona by the threats of the Norsemen. This monastery was completed in 814, and from that day became the headquarters of the Columbian monks. Here is still to be seen one of the finest round towers of Ireland (seventy feet high); an oratory called *St Columb-Kill's house;* a cemetery-cross with this inscription on the plinth—*Crux Patricii et Columbe.* Two celebrated Gospels of the Trinity College Bible at Dublin are called the *Book of Kells* and the *Book of Durrow.* In the important work of Dr Petrie, called *Inquiry into the Origin and Uses of the Round Towers of Ireland*, 1845, 2d ed., p. 430, will be found an engraving of a building near the cemetery of Kells, called St Columba's house. It is a square building 23 feet long, 21 broad, and 38 feet high, but not vaulted. The walls are 4 feet in thickness; the roof is of stone, with two gables. It has little circular windows at a height of 15 feet. It was formerly divided into three chambers and two storeys. In one of these chambers is to be seen a great flat stone 6 feet long, which is called the bed of Columba. The roof of this building is entirely covered with ivy. In the isle of Tory a round tower, belonging to the monastery constructed by Columba, still remains. Petrie (p. 389) also recognises round towers in the buildings

lamentable changes, nor of the miserable triumphs of inhuman force and wicked persecution.

The young Columba was specially attached to Derry, where he habitually lived. He superintended with care not only the discipline and studies of his community, but external matters, even so far as to watch over the preservation of the neighbouring forest. He would never permit an oak to be cut down. Those which fell by natural decay, or were struck down by the wind, were alone made use of for the fire which was lighted on the arrival of strangers, or distributed to the neighbouring poor. The poor had a first right, in Ireland as everywhere else, to the goods of the monks; and the Monastery of Derry fed a hundred applicants every day with methodical regularity.[1]

His songs in honour of Derry.

At a more advanced age our saint gave vent to his tenderness for his monastic creations in songs, an echo of which has come down to us. The text of these songs, such as has been preserved, is probably later than Columba; but it is written in the oldest Irish dialect, and it expresses, naturally enough, the sentiments of the founder and his disciples:—

> "Were all the tribute of Scotia[2] mine,
> From its midland to its borders,

quoted in connection with the two miracles told by Adamnan, c. 15, in which mention is made of bells and belfries.

[1] O'Donnell, ap. Colgan, p. 397, 398.

[2] Let us repeat here that the names of *Scotia*, *Scotti*, when they occur in works of the seventh to the twelfth century, are almost exclusively ap-

I would give all for one little cell
In my beautiful Derry.
For its peace and for its purity,
For the white angels that go
In crowds from one end to the other,
I love my beautiful Derry.
For its quietness and its purity,
For heaven's angels that come and go
Under every leaf of the oaks,
I love my beautiful Derry.

My Derry, my fair oak grove,
My dear little cell and dwelling,
Oh God in the heavens above!
Let him who profanes it be cursed.
Beloved are Durrow and Derry,
Beloved is Raphoe the pure,
Beloved the fertile Drumhome,
Beloved are Sords and Kells!
But sweeter and fairer to me
The salt sea where the sea-gulls cry
When I come to Derry from far,
It is sweeter and dearer to me—
Sweeter to me." [1]

Nor was it only his own foundations which he thus celebrated: another poem has been preserved

plied to Ireland and the Irish, and were extended later to Scotland proper, the north and west of which were peopled by a colony of Irish Scots, only at a later period. From thence comes the name of *Erse*, *Erysche*, or *Irish*, retained up to our own day, by the Irish dialect, otherwise called Gaelic. In Adamnan, as in Bede, Scotia means Ireland, and modern Scotland is comprehended in the general title of Britannia. At a later period the name of Scotia disappeared in Ireland, and became identified with the country conquered and colonised by the *Scots* in Scotland, like that of *Anglia* in Britain, and *Francia* in Gaul.

[1] See REEVES, pp. 288, 289. The origin and continuation of this poem will be seen further on.

which is attributed to him, and which is dedicated to the glory of the monastic isle of Arran, situated upon the western coast of Ireland, where he had gone to venerate the inhabitants and the sanctuaries.[1]

"O Arran, my sun; my heart is in the west with thee. To sleep on thy pure soil is as good as to be buried in the land of St Peter and St Paul. To live within the sound of thy bells is to live in joy. O Arran, my sun, my love is in the west with thee."[2]

These poetic effusions reveal Columba to us under one of his most attractive aspects, as one of the minstrels of the national poetry of Ireland, the intimate union of which with the Catholic faith,[3] and its unconquerable empire over the souls of that generous people, can scarcely be exaggerated. Columba was not only himself a poet, but lived always in great and affectionate sympathy with the bards who, at that time, occupied so high a place in the social and political institutions of Ireland, and who were to be met with everywhere, in the palaces and monasteries, as on the public roads. What he did for this powerful corporation, and how, after having

His taste for poetry.

[1] "Invisit aliquando S. Endeum aliosque sanctos, qui plurimi in Ara insula angelicam vitam ducebant . . . in ea insula quam sanctorum vestigiis tritam et monumentis inclytam magno affectu venerabatur."—O'Donnell, book i. c. 105, 106. Compare Colgan, *Act. SS. Hibernia*, vol. i. p. 704-714. There were still thirteen churches on this island in 1645, with the tombs of St Enda and of a hundred and twenty other saints.

[2] Quoted in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society*, p. 183.

[3] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 391.

been their brother and friend, he became their protector and saviour, will be seen further on. Let us merely state at present that, himself a great traveller, he received the travelling bards in the different communities where he lived: among others, in that which he had built upon an islet[1] of the lake which the Boyle traverses before it throws itself into the Shannon. He confided to them the care of arranging the monastic and provincial annals, which were to be afterwards deposited in the charter-chest of the community; but, above all, he made them sing for his own pleasure and that of his monks; and the latter reproached him energetically if he permitted one of those wandering poets to depart without having asked to hear some of his chants, accompanied by his harp.[2]

And his connection with the bards.

The monk Columba was, then, a poet. After Ossian and his glorious compeer of the Vosges, he opens the series of two hundred Irish poets, whose memories and names, in default of their works, have remained dear to Ireland. He wrote his verses not only in Latin, but also and more frequently in Irish. Only three of his Latin poems survive; but two centuries ago eleven of his Irish poems

[1] The ruins of a church attributed to Columba are still to bē seen there. Two miles from this island, on the banks of a cascade formed by the Boyle, as it throws itself into the lake (Loch Key), rises another monastery founded by him, and which became, in 1161, a Cistercian abbey of some celebrity—the Abbey of Boyle.

[2] "Quidam Scoticus poeta. . . . Cur a nobis regredienti Cronano poetæ aliquod ex more suæ artis canticum non postulasti laudabiliter decantari?"—ADAMNAN, book i. c. 42.

were still in existence,[1] which have not all perished, and the most authentic of which is dedicated to the glory of St Bridget, the virgin slave, patroness of Ireland and foundress of female religious life in the Isle of Saints. She was still living when Columba was born.[2] Through the obscure and halting efforts of this infantine poetry, some tones of sincere and original feeling may yet be disentangled :—

"Bridget, the good and the virgin
Bridget, our torch and our sun,
Bridget, radiant and unseen,
May she lead us to the eternal kingdom!
May Bridget defend us
Against all the troops of hell,
And all the adversities of life;
May she beat them down before us.
All the ill movements of the flesh,
This pure virgin whom we love,
Worthy of honour without end,
May she extinguish in us.
Yes, she shall always be our safeguard,
Dear saint of Lagenia;
After Patrick she comes the first,
The pillar of the land,

[1] "Diversa poemata S. Columbæ patrio idiomate scripta exstant penes me."—Colgan, *Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 472. He gives the title and quotes the first verse of each Irish poem. Dr Reeves has given in his Appendix F the Irish text and English translation of two of these pieces, the MS. of which has passed from the hands of the Franciscans of Louvain, where the pious and patriotic Colgan wrote, to the library of Bourgogne at Brussels. They are also to be found in the Bodleian at Oxford, in a MS. which contains thirty-six Irish poems attributed to Columba.

[2] He was born in 519, and she died in 523, according to the chronology of Colgan.

Glorious among all glories,
Queen among all queens.
When old age comes upon us,
May she be to us as the shirt of hair,
May she fill us with her grace,
May Bridget protect us." [1]

It seems thus apparent that Columba was as much a bard as a monk during the first part of his life; he had the vagabond inclination, the ardent, agitated, even quarrelsome character of the race. Like most Irish saints and even monks whom history has kept in mind, he had a passionate love for travelling;[2] and to that passion he added another which brought him more than one misadventure. Books, which were less rare in Ireland than everywhere else, were nevertheless much sought after, and guarded with jealous care in the monastic libraries, which were their sole depositories. Not only an excessive value was put upon them, but they were even supposed to possess the emotions and almost the passions of living beings. Columba had a passion for

His passion for MSS.

[1] "Nos defendamur omni tempore
Per meam sanctam de Lagenia
Suppar columna regni,
Post Patricium primarium:
Quæ decor decorum
Quæ regina regia. . . .
Erit post senium
Nostrum corpus in cilicio:
Ejus gratia respergamur.
Nos protegat Brigicta."

Trias Thaumat., p. 606.

[2] "Omnes regni provincias continuo peragrans, urbes, oppida, paga circumiens."—O'Donnell, p. 398.

fine manuscripts, and one of his biographers attributes to him the laborious feat of having transcribed with his own hand three hundred copies of the Gospel or of the Psalter.[1] He went everywhere in search of volumes, which he could borrow or copy, often experiencing refusals which he resented bitterly. There was then in Ossory, in the south-west, a holy recluse, very learned, doctor in laws and in philosophy, named Longarad *with the white legs*, because in walking barefoot his legs, which were covered with white hair, were visible. Columba having gone to visit him asked leave to examine his books. The old man gave a direct refusal; then Columba burst forth in denunciations—"May thy books no longer do thee any good, neither to thee nor to those who come after thee, since thou takest occasion by them to show thy inhospitality." This curse was heard, according to the legend. As soon as old Longarad died his books became unintelligible. They still exist, says an author of the ninth century, but no man can read them. The legend adds that in all the schools of Ireland, and even in Columba's own cell, the leathern satchels in which the monks and students carried their books, unhooked themselves from the wall and fell to the ground on the day of the old philosopher's death.[2]

Longarad with the hairy legs.

A similar narrative, more authentic but not less

[1] O'Donnell, ap. Colgan, p. 438. The same number has been seen above attributed to Dega. Irish narratives know scarcely any numerals but those of three hundred and three thousand.

[2] *Festilogium* of Angus the Culdee, quoted by O'Curry.

singular, serves as an introduction to the decisive event which changed the destiny of Columba, and transformed him from a wandering poet and ardent bookworm into a missionary and apostle. While visiting his ancient master, Finnian, our saint found means to make a clandestine and hurried copy of the abbot's Psalter, by shutting himself up at night in the church where the Psalter was deposited, lighting his nocturnal work, as happened to I know not what Spanish saint, by the light which escaped from his left hand while he wrote with the right. The abbot Finnian discovered what was going on by means of a curious wanderer, who, attracted by that singular light, looked in through the keyhole, and while his face was pressed against the door had his eye suddenly torn out by a crane, one of those familiar birds who were permitted by the Irish monks to seek a home in their churches.[1] Indignant at what he thought a theft, Finnian claimed the copy when it was finished, on the ground that a copy made without permission ought to belong to the master of the original, seeing that the transcription is the son of the original book. Columba refused to give up his work, and the question was referred to the king in his palace at Tara.

Contest about the Psalter, which Columba would have copied against his master's will.

King Diarmid, or Dermott, supreme monarch of Ireland, was, like Columba, descended from the

1 "Admoto ad januæ fissuram oculo, mirari cœpit. . . . Grus quædam cicurata, quæ in ecclesia erat, incauti hominis oculum impecto rostro effodit."—O'Donnell, book ii. c. 1.

King Diarmid, founder of Clonmacnoise. 538 or 548.

great king Niall, but by another son than he whose great-grandson Columba was. He lived, like all the princes of his country, in a close union with the Church, which was represented in Ireland, more completely than anywhere else, by the monastic order. Exiled and persecuted in his youth, he had found refuge in an island, situated in one of those lakes which interrupt the course of the Shannon, the chief river of Ireland, and had there formed a friendship with a holy monk called Kieran, who was no other than the son of the carpenter, the jealous comrade of Columba at the monastic school of Clonard, but since that time his generous rival in knowledge and in austerity. Upon the still solitary bank of the river the two friends had planned the foundation of a monastery, which, owing to the marshy nature of the soil, had to be built upon piles. "Plant with me the first stake," the monk said to the exiled prince, "putting your hand under mine; and soon that hand shall be over all the men of Erin;" and it happened that Diarmid was very shortly after called to the throne. He immediately used his new power to endow richly the monastery which was rendered doubly dear to him by the recollection of his exile and of his friend. This sanctuary became, under the name of Clonmacnoise, one of the greatest monasteries and most frequented schools of Ireland, and even of Western Europe. It was so rich in possessions and even in dependent communities, daughters or vassals

of its hierarchical authority, that, according to a popular saying, half of Ireland was contained within the enclosure of Clonmacnoise. This enclosure actually contained nine churches, with two round towers; the kings and lords of the two banks of the Shannon had their burying-place there for a thousand years, upon a green height which overlooks the marshy banks of the river. The sadly picturesque ruins may still be seen, and among them a stone cross, over which the prince and the abbot, holding between them the stake consecrated by the legend, are roughly sculptured.[1]

Judgment of King Diarmid.

This king might accordingly be regarded as a competent judge in a contest at once monastic and literary; he might even have been suspected of partiality for Columba, his kinsman—and yet he pronounced against him. His judgment was given in a rustic phrase which has passed into a proverb in Ireland—*To every cow her calf*,[1] and, conse-

[1] Clonmacnoise, which is situated on the eastern bank of the Shannon, seven miles below Athlone, and was afterwards made a bishop's see, must not be confounded with Cloyne, though the Latin designation, *Clonensis* or *Cluanensis*, is the same. This great abbey is chiefly remarkable on account of its abbot Tighernach (1088), a much quoted historian, whose annals have been published in the second volume of *Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores* by O'Connor. Within its vast enclosure was a community of those lay monks called *Culdees*, of whom we shall have occasion to speak further on, who had been created by a lay brother of the monastery called *Conn of the poor*, by reason of his great charity. Later in the twelfth century it passed into the hands of the regular canons of St Augustin, who retained it up to the general spoliation.—O'Curry, p. 60. *The Gentleman's Magazine* of February 1864, publishes a plan of the actual condition of Clonmacnoise, with a very interesting notice of the architecture of the ruins by Mr Parker.

[1] "*Le gach boin a boinin, le gach leabhar a leabhran.*"

Protest of Columba.

quently, to every book its copy. Columba protested loudly. "It is an unjust sentence," he said, "and I will revenge myself." After this incident a young prince, son of the provincial king of Connaught, who was pursued for having committed an involuntary murder, took refuge with Columba, but was seized and put to death by the king. The irritation of the poet-monk knew no bounds. The ecclesiastical immunity which he enjoyed in his quality of superior and founder of several monasteries ought to have, in his opinion, created a sort of sanctuary around his person, and this immunity had been scandalously violated by the execution of the youth whom he protected. He threatened the king with prompt vengeance. "I will denounce," he said, "to my brethren and my kindred thy wicked judgment, and the violation in my person of the immunity of the Church; they will listen to my complaint, and punish thee sword in hand.[1] Bad king, thou shalt no more see my face in thy province until God, the just Judge, has sub-

[1] "Scito, rex inique, quia amodo faciem meam in tua provincia non videbis donec. . . . Sicut me hodie coram senioribus tuis iniquo judicio despexisti, sic te Deus æternus in conspectu inimicorum tuorum te despiciet in die belli."—ANON. ap. USSERIUM, *De Primord. Eccles. Brit.*, cited by Colgan, p. 462. "Ego expostulabo cum fratribus et cognatis meis iniquum arbitrium tuum, et contemptam in me temeratamque Ecclesiæ immunitatem . . . et si non meam, at certe Dei regni atque Ecclesiæ causam ducto in te exercitu vindicabunt."—O'DONNELL, book ii. c. 7. This is assuredly a much modernised version of Columba's declaration of war; but the true facts are to be found in the unanimous statements of Irish tradition. Adamnan preserves a prudent silence upon all events anterior to the saint's mission to Scotland.

dued thy pride. As thou has humbled me to-day before thy lords and thy friends, God will humble thee on the battle day before thine enemies." Diarmid attempted to retain him by force in the neighbourhood: but, evading the vigilance of his guards, he escaped by night from the court of Tara, and directed his steps to his native province of Tyrconnell. His first stage was Monasterboyce, where he heard from the monks that the king had planted guards on all the ordinary roads to intercept him. He then continued his course by a solitary pathway over the desert hills which lay between him and the north of Ireland; and as he went upon his lonely way, his soul found utterance in a pious song. He fled, chanting the *Song of Trust*, which has been preserved to us, and which may be reckoned among the most authentic relics of the ancient Irish tongue. We quote from it the following verses:—

He flies, chanting the Song of Trust.

"Alone am I on the mountain,
O royal Sun; prosper my path,
And then I shall have nothing to fear.
Were I guarded by six thousand,
Though they might defend my skin,
When the hour of death is fixed,
Were I guarded by six thousand,
In no fortress could I be safe.
Even in a church the wicked are slain,
Even in an isle amidst a lake;
But God's elect are safe
Even in the front of battle.

No man can kill me before my day,
Even had we closed in combat;
And no man can save my life
When the hour of death has come.
My life!
As God pleases let it be;
Nought can be taken from it,
Nought can be added to it:
The lot which God has given
Ere a man dies must be lived out.
He who seeks more, were he a prince,
Shall not a mite obtain.
A guard!
A guard may guide him on his way;
But can they, can they, guard
Against the touch of death? . . .
Forget thy poverty a while;
Let us think of the world's hospitality.
The Son of Mary will prosper thee,
And every guest shall have his share.
Many a time
What is spent returns to the bounteous hand,
And that which is kept back
Not the less has passed away.
O living God!
Alas for him who evil works!
That which he thinks not of comes to him,
That which he hopes vanishes out of his hand.
There is no *Sreod*[1] that can tell our fate,
Nor bird upon the branch,
Nor trunk of gnarled oak. . . .
Better is He in whom we trust,
The King who has made us all,

[1] An unknown Druidical term, probably meaning some pagan superstition of the same description as the flight of birds and the knots in the trees, mentioned immediately after.

Who will not leave me to-night without refuge.
I adore not the voice of birds,
Nor chance, nor the love of a son or a wife.
My Druid is Christ, the Son of God,
The Son of Mary, the great Abbot,
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
My lands are with the King of kings;
My order at Kells and at Moone."[1]

"Thus sang Columba," says the preface to this *Song of Trust*, "on his lonely journey: and this song will protect him who repeats it while he travels."

He raises civil war.

Columba arrived safely in his province, and immediately set to work to excite against King Diarmid the numerous and powerful clans of his relatives and friends, who belonged to a branch of the house of Niall distinct from and hostile to that of the reigning monarch. His efforts were crowned with success. The Hy-Nialls of the North armed eagerly against the Hy-Nialls of the South, of whom Diarmid was the special chief.[2] They naturally obtained the aid of the king of Connaught,

[1] Moone, in the county of Kildare, where the abbatial cross of St Columba is preserved. The translation here printed is from the version given by Dr Reeves, with some slight modifications.—*Translator's note.*

[2] "Contulit se ad domus Conalli, Gulbanis et Eugenii proceres carne sibi propinquos, et coram eis de malis injuriis querelam instituit."—COLGAN, *Act. SS. Hibern.*, vol. i. p. 645. Compare the genealogical table of the descendants of Niall given by Dr Reeves, p. 251. There were ten supreme kings of the branch of Hy-Nialls of the North, or of Tyrconnell, to which Columba belonged, and seventeen of the southern branch, of which Diarmid was a member. These kings alternated for two centuries, mutually killing and dethroning each other. See the notes of Kelly, to Lynch, *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. ii. pp. 12, 15.

father of the young prince who had been executed. According to other narratives, the struggle was one between the Nialls of the North and the Picts established in the centre of Ireland. But in any case, it was the north and west of Ireland which took arms against the supreme king. Diarmid marched to meet them, and they met in battle at Cool-Drewny, or Cul-Dreimhne, upon the borders of Ultonia and Connacia. He was completely beaten, and obliged to take refuge at Tara. The victory was due, according to the annalist Tighernach, to the prayers and songs of Columba, who had fasted and prayed with all his might to obtain from Heaven the punishment of the royal insolence,[1] and who, besides, was present at the battle, and took upon himself before all men the responsibility of the bloodshed.

Defeat of the king while Columba prays against him.

As for the manuscript which had been the object of this strange conflict of copyright elevated into a civil war, it was afterwards venerated as a kind of national, military, and religious palladium. Under the name of *Cathac*, or *Fighter*, the Latin Psalter transcribed by Columba, enshrined in a sort of portable altar, became the national relic of the O'Donnell clan. For more than a thousand years it was carried with them to battle as a pledge of victory, on the condition of being supported upon

The Psalter of Battle.

[1] "Diem ineundi prælii jejunio et oratione prævertit, Deum afflicte rogans ut regiæ insolentiæ vindicibus sine suorum damno annuat victoriam."—O'Donnell, *loc. cit.*

the breast of a clerk pure from all mortal sin. It has escaped as by miracle from the ravages of which Ireland has been the victim, and exists still, to the great joy of all learned Irish patriots.[1]

Synod of Teilte, 562. Columba is excommunicated.

Columba, though victor, had soon to undergo the double reaction of personal remorse and the condemnation of many pious souls.[2] The latter punishment was the first to be felt. He was accused by a synod convoked in the centre of the royal domain at Teilte,[3] of having occasioned the shedding of Christian blood, and sentence of excommunication was in his absence pronounced against him. Perhaps this accusation was not entirely confined to the war which had been raised on account of the copied Psalter. His excitable and vindictive character, and, above all, his passionate attachment to his relatives, and the violent part which he took in

[1] The annals of the Four Masters report that in a battle waged in 1497 between the O'Donnells and the MacDermotts, the sacred book fell into the hands of the latter, who, however, restored it in 1499. It was preserved for thirteen hundred years in the O'Donnell family, and at present belongs to a baronet of that name, who has permitted it to be exhibited in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, where it can be seen by all. It is composed of fifty-eight leaves of parchment, bound in silver. The learned O'Curry (p. 322) has given a facsimile of a fragment of this MS., which he does not hesitate to believe is in the handwriting of our saint, as well as that of the fine copy of the Gospels called the *Book of Kells*, of which he has also given a facsimile. See Reeves's notes upon Adamnan, p. 250, and the pamphlet upon Marianus Scotus, p. 12.

[2] "Cum illata regi Diermitio clades paulo post ad aures sanctorum Hiberniæ pervenit, Columbam, quod tantæ cladis vel auctor vel occasio fuisset, taxabant."—O'Donnell, ii. 5. "In synodo sanctorum Hiberniæ gravis querela contra S. Columbam, tanquam auctorem tam multi sanguinis effusi, instituta est."—Colgan, *Act. SS. Hibern.*, p. 645.

[3] Now Teltown, a little village near Kells, in the county of Meath.

their domestic disputes and in their continually recurring rivalries, had engaged him in other struggles, the date of which is perhaps later than that of his first departure from Ireland, but the responsibility of which is formally imputed to him by various authorities,[1] and which also ended in bloody battles.

Other wars of Columba.

St Brendan takes up his defence.

Columba was not a man to draw back before his accusers and judges. He presented himself before the synod which had struck without hearing him. He found a defender there in the famous Abbot Brendan, the founder of the Monastery of Birr. When Columba made his appearance, this abbot rose, went up to him, and embraced him. "How can you give the kiss of peace to an excommunicated man?" said some of the other members of the synod. "You would do as I have done," he answered, "and you never would have excommunicated him, had you seen what I see—a pillar of fire which goes before him, and the angels that accompany him.

[1] Especially by the argument in Irish of the Latin poem of Columba called *Altus prosator*, which will be mentioned further on. This argument is quoted textually by Dr Reeves, p. 253. This author is of opinion that the legendary writers have antedated all these troublesome occurrences out of consideration for the apostle of Caledonia, in order to concentrate all his eccentricities in the earlier part of his life before his voluntary expiation. Adamnan, who follows no chronological order, keeps silence on most of the events which preceded the voluntary exile of the saint, and only mentions vaguely the synod by which he was excommunicated; but he proves that after that exile Columba several times returned to Ireland, where his influence was always very considerable. "Cum a quodam synodo pro quibusdam venialibus et tam excusabilibus causis, non recte, ut post in fine claruit, excommunicaretur Columba . . . ad eamdem contra ipsum collectam venit congregationem. . . . Hoc tamen factum est in Teilte."—Book iii. c. 3.

I dare not disdain a man predestined by God to be the guide of an entire people to eternal life." Thanks to the intervention of Brendan, or to some other motive not mentioned, the sentence of excommunication was withdrawn; but Columba was charged to win to Christ by his preaching as many pagan souls as the number of Christians who had fallen in the battle of Cool-Drewny.[1]

He consults several confessors.

It was then that his soul seems first to have been troubled, and that remorse planted in it the germs at once of a startling conversion and of his future apostolic mission. Sheltered as he was from all vengeance or secular penalties, he must have felt himself struck so much the more by the ecclesiastical judgment pronounced against him. Various legends reveal him to us at this crisis of his life, wandering long from solitude to solitude, and from monastery to monastery, seeking out holy monks, masters of penitence and Christian virtue, and asking them anxiously what he should do to obtain the pardon of God for the murder of so many victims.[2] One of these, Froëch, who had long been his friend, reproached him with affectionate severity for having been the instigator of that murderous fight. "It was not I who caused it," said Columba with animation; "it was the unjust judgment of King Diarmid—it was his violation of ecclesiastical

[1] Colgan, *loc. cit.*, p. 645.

[2] "Petens . . . quo scilicet modo post necem multorum occisorum, benevolentiam Dei ac remissionem peccatorum obtinere mereretur."—*Vita S. Molassii*, ap. *Trias Thaumat.*, p. 461.

immunity which did it all." "A monk," answered the solitary, "would have done better to bear the injury with patience than to avenge it with arms in his hands." "Be it so," said Columba; "but it is hard for a man unjustly provoked to restrain his heart and to sacrifice justice."[1]

He was more humble with Abban, another famous monk of the time, founder of many religious houses, one of which was called the *Cell of Tears*, because the special grace of weeping for sin was obtained there.[2] This gentle and courageous soldier of Christ was specially distinguished by his zeal against the fighting men and disturbers of the public peace. He had been seen to throw himself between two chiefs at the moment when their lances were crossed at each other's breasts:[3] and on another occasion had gone alone and unarmed to meet one of the most formidable rievers of the island, who was still a pagan and a member of a sovereign family, had made his arms drop from his hands, and had changed first into a Christian and then into a monk the royal robber, whose great-

[1] "Non ego, sed iniquum in me Diermitii regis arbitrium, et prævaricatio ecclesiasticæ immunitatisisti prælio et malis inde secutis causam præbuit. . . . Præstaret religioso viro injuriam patienter perferre, quam pugnaciter propulsare. Ita est, infit S. Columba, sed injuste provocato haud pronum est erumpentem animi motum, præsertim cum justus esse videtur, cohibere."—O'Donnell, *Vita quinta*, ii. 8.

[2] "Et istud monasterium a multis vocatur *Cealt nà ndèr*, id est cellula lacrymarum: eo quod hominibus ibi a Deo pœnitentiales lacrymæ . . . donantur."—*Vita S. Abbani*, ap. Colgan, lib. i. p. 615.

[3] "Tam appropinquabat ad alterutrum, ut lanceæ eorum ante se mixtæ essent invicem."—*Ibid.*, p. 619.

grandson has recorded this incident.[1] When Columba went to Abban, he said, "I come to beseech thee to pray for the souls of all those who have perished in the late war, which I raised for the honour of the Church. I know they will obtain grace by thy intercession, and I conjure thee to ask what is the will of God in respect to them from the angel who talks with thee every day." The aged solitary, without reproaching Columba, resisted his entreaties for some time, by reason of his great modesty, but ended by consenting; and after having prayed, gave him the assurance that these souls enjoyed eternal repose.[2]

Columba, thus reassured as to the fate of the victims of his rage, had still to be enlightened in respect to his own duty. He found the light which he sought from a holy monk called Molaise, famed for his studies of Holy Scripture,[3] who had already been his confessor, and whose ruined monastery is still visible in one of the isles of the Atlantic.[4] This

[1] "Quidam ex regali genere istius terræ . . . heros et tyrannus, qui semper occidit et rapit et vivit in latrociniis . . . videntes comites S. Abbani virum armigerum, horridissimum in incessu et habitu, cum simili turba militum . . . unusquisque hinc et inde cœpit se abscondere. Vir autem Dei fide armatus intrepidus viam ibat. . . . Ego autem qui vitam S. Abbani collegi sum nepos ipsius filii quem baptizavit."—*Vita S. Abbani*, ap. COLGAN, lib. i. p. 617.

[2] "Ut ores pro animabus illorum qui occisi fuerunt in bello commisso nuper nobis suadentibus, causa Ecclesiæ. . . . Et angelus ait: Requiem habebunt."—*Ibid.*, p. 624, after the MS. of Salamanca, which is more complete on this point than the ordinary text.

[3] "Visitavit S. Lasrianum confessorem suum. . . . Divinarum scripturarum scrutator."

[4] Innishmurry, on the coast of Sligo.

Molaise condemns him to perpetual exile.

severe hermit confirmed the decision of the synod; but to the obligation of converting to the Christian faith an equal number of pagans as there were of Christians killed in the civil war he added a new condition, which bore cruelly upon a soul so passionately attached to country and kindred. The confessor condemned his penitent to perpetual exile from Ireland.[1] Columba bowed to this sentence with sad resignation — "What you have commanded," he said, "shall be done."[2]

Devotion of the young Mochonna.

He announced his future fate in the first place to his relations, the warlike Nialls of Tyrconnell. "An angel has taught me that I must leave Ireland and remain in exile as long as I live, because of all those whom you slew in the last battle, which you fought on my account, and also in others which you know of."[3] It is not recorded that any among his kindred attempted to hold him back; but when he acquainted his disciples with his intended emigration, twelve among them decided to follow him. The most ardent of all was a young monk called Mochonna, son of the provincial king of Ulster. In vain Columba represented to him that he ought not to abandon his parents and native soil. "It is thou," answered the young man, "who art my father, the Church is my mother, and my country

[1] *Vita S. Molassii*, ubi supra.

[2] "Quod indictum est, inquit ad Molassium, fiet."—O'Donnell, ii. 5.

[3] "Mihi, juxta quod ab angelo prænonitus sum, ex Hiberniæ migrandum est, et dum vixero exsulandum, quod mei causa per vos plurimi extincti sunt."—*Ibid.*, ii. 4.

is where I can gather the largest harvest for Christ." Then, in order to render all resistance impossible, he made a solemn vow aloud to leave his country and follow Columba—"I swear to follow thee wherever thou goest, until thou hast led me to Christ, to whom thou hast consecrated me."[1] It was thus, says his historian, that he forced himself rather than offered himself as a companion to the great exile in the course of his apostolical career among the Picts—and he had no more active or devoted auxiliary.

Columba accepted, though not without sadness, as has been seen, the sentence of his friend. He dedicated the rest of his life to the expiation of his faults by a voluntary exile, and by preaching the faith to the heathen. Up to this time we have had difficulty in disentangling the principal events of the first forty years of his life from a maze of confused and contradictory narratives. We have followed what has seemed to us the most probable account, and one most calculated to throw light upon the character of the saint, his people, and his country. Henceforward we shall find a surer guide in Adamnan, who only touches very slightly upon the first half of his hero's life, and who, with an apparent contempt for the unanimous testimony of

1 "Se peregrinationis socium non magis obtulit, quam obtrusit. . . . Tu mihi pater es, Ecclesia mater, et patria ubi uberiorem bene merendi segetem et majorem Christo deserviendi ansam invenero. . . . Te quocumque ieris sequar, donec ad Christum perduxeris, cui me pridem consecraras."—O'Donnell, *Vita Columbæ*, lib. iii. c. 24, 25, 26.

Irish witnesses, while agreeing that the departure of the saint took place after the battle in which the King of Ireland had been beaten by Columba's kindred,[1] attributes his departure solely to his desire for the conversion of the heathens of the great neighbouring isle.[2]

[1] "Post bellum Cule Drebene . . . quo tempore vir beatus de Scotia peregrinaturus primitus enavigavit."—ADAMN., i. 7. What is said of the poem called *Altus*, the composition of which was suggested by the remorse of Columba after his three battles, will be seen further on, p. 147.

[2] "De Scotis ad Britanniam pro Christo peregrinari volens, enavigavit."—ADAMN., *Præf.* The MS. of Salamanca, quoted by Colgan, adds: "*Ad convertendos ad fidem Pictos.*"

CHAPTER II.

COLUMBA AN EMIGRANT IN CALEDONIA—THE HOLY ISLE OF IONA.

Aspect of the Hebridean archipelago.—Columba first lands at Orousay, but leaves it because Ireland is visible from its shores.—Description of Iona.—First buildings of the new monastery.—What remains of it.—Enthusiasm of Johnson on landing there in the eighteenth century.—Columba bitterly regrets his country.—Passionate elegies on the pains of exile.—Note upon the poem of *Altus*.—Proofs in his biography of the continuance of that patriotic regret.—The stork comes from Ireland to Iona.

He who has not seen the islands and gulfs of the western coast of Scotland and who has not been tossed upon the sombre sea of the Hebrides, can scarcely form any image of it to himself. Nothing can be less seductive at the first glance than that austere and solemn nature, which is picturesque without charm, and grand without grace. The traveller passes sadly through an archipelago of naked and desert islands, sowed, like so many extinct volcanoes, upon the dull and sullen waters, which are sometimes broken by rapid currents and dangerous whirlpools. Except on rare days, when the sun—that pale sun of the North—gives life to these shores, the eye wanders over a vast surface of

gloomy sea, broken at intervals by the whitening crest of waves, or by the foamy line of the tide, which dashes here against long reefs of rock, there against immense cliffs, with a forlorn roar which fills the air. Through the continual fogs and rains of that rude climate may be seen by times the summits of chains of mountains, whose abrupt and naked sides slope to the sea, and whose base is bathed by those cold waves which are kept in constant agitation by the shock of contrary currents, and the tempests of wind which burst from the lakes and narrow ravines farther inland. The melancholy of the landscape is relieved only by that peculiar configuration of the coast, which has been remarked by the ancient authors, and especially by Tacitus—a configuration which exists besides only in Greece and Scandinavia.[1] As in the fiords of Norway, the sea cuts and hollows out the shores of the islands into a host of bays and gulfs, of strange depth, and as narrow as profound.[2] These gulfs take the most varied forms, penetrating by a thousand tortuous folds into the middle of the land, as if to identify themselves with

[1] "Nusquam latius dominari mare, multum fluminum huc atque illuc ferre, nec littore tenus adcrescere aut resorberi, sed influere penitus atque ambire, etiam jugis atque montibus inseri velut in suo."—TACITUS, *Agricolæ Vita*, c. 10. "Diversorum prolixioribus promontoriorum tractibus, quæ arenatis Oceani sinibus ambiuntur."—GILDAS, vol. iii. p. 11, ed. Stevens.

[2] "Mare, quo latus ingens
Dant scopuli, et multa litus se valle receptat."
PERSEUS, Sat. vi.

These lines of Perseus upon the *Riviera* of Genoa describe still better the western coast of Scotland.

the long and winding lakes of the Highland interior. Numberless peninsulas, terminating in pointed headlands, or summits covered with clouds; isthmuses so narrow as to leave the sea visible at both sides; straits so closely shut between two walls of rock that the eye hesitates to plunge into that gloom; enormous cliffs of basalt or of granite, their sides perforated with rents; caverns, as at Staffa, lofty as churches, flanked through all their length by prismatic columns, through which the waves of the ocean dash with groans; and here and there, in contrast with that wild majesty, perhaps in an island, perhaps upon the shore of the mainland, a sandy beach, a little plain covered with scanty prickling grass; a natural port, capable of sheltering a few frail boats; everywhere, in short, a strangely varied combination of land and sea, but where the sea carries the day, penetrates and dominates everything, as if to affirm her empire, and, as Tacitus has said, "*inseri velut in suo.*"

Such is the present aspect—such must have been, with the addition of the forests which have disappeared, the aspect of those shores when Columba sought them to continue and end his life there. It was from this point that he was to assail the Land of Woods,[1] that unconquerable Caledonia, where the Romans had been obliged to relinquish the idea of

[1] In Gælic, *Calyddon*, land of forests, according to Augustin Thierry; according to Camden this name is derived from *kaled*, which means hard and wild.

establishing themselves, where Christianity hitherto had appeared only to vanish, and which for long seemed to Europe almost outside the boundaries of the world. To Columba was to fall the honour of introducing civilisation into the stony, sterile, and icy *Escosse la Sauvage*,[1] which the imagination of our fathers made the dwelling-place of hunger, and of the prince of demons. Sailing by these distant shores, who could refrain from evoking the holy memory and forgotten glory of the great missionary? It is from him that Scotland has derived that religious spirit which, led astray as it has been since the Reformation, and in spite of its own rigid narrowness, remains still so powerful, so popular, so fruitful, and so free.[2] Half veiled by the misty distance, Columba stands first among those original and touching historical figures to whom Scotland owes the great place she has occupied in the memory and imagination of modern nations, from the noble chivalry of the feudal and Catholic kingdom of the Bruces and Douglases, down to the unparalleled

[1] See the expressions of Jean de Meung, Froissart, and others, collected by M. Francisque Michel, in his fine and learned work, *Les Ecossais en France et les Français en Ecosse*, printed by Gounouilhou, Bordeaux, 1862, p. 3-5. The words addressed by St Louis when sick to his son are well known: "I pray thee to make thyself loved by the people of thy kingdom; for if thou rulest ill, I had rather that a Scot came from Scotland and reigned in thy place."—JOINVILLE, p. 4.

[2] This is evidenced by the wonderful outburst of the *Free Kirk*, produced in 1843 by a local dispute upon the lay patronage of parishes, and which has established in almost every village of Scotland a new community and a new church, sustained by voluntary contributions in face of the official Church, which continues to hold a portion of the ecclesiastical possessions of Catholic times.

misfortunes of Mary Stuart and Charles Edward, and all the poetic and romantic recollections which the pure and upright genius of Walter Scott has endowed with European fame.

A voluntary exile, at the age of forty-two, from his native island, Columba embarked with his twelve companions[1] in one of those great barks of osier covered with hide which the Celtic nations employed for their navigation. He landed upon a desert island situated on the north of the opening of that series of gulfs and lakes which, extending from the south-west to the north-east, cuts the Caledonian peninsula in two, and which at that period separated the still heathen Picts from the district occupied by the Irish Scots, who were partially Christianised. This isle, which he has made immortal, took from him the name of I-Colm-Kill (the island of Columb-Kill), but is better known under that of Iona.[2] A legend, suggested by one of our saint's most marked characteristics, asserts that he first landed upon another islet called Oronsay,[3] but that, having climbed a hill near the shore immediately on landing, he found that he

Columba lands at Iona.

[1] See their names in Appendix A of Reeves. Let us at present remark two among them whom we shall meet again further on. Baithen, Columba's secretary, and his successor as abbot of Iona, and Diormit or Dermott, his minister (*ministrator*), the monk specially attached to his person, after the young Mochonna, of whom mention has already been made.

[2] The primitive name was *Hy*, *Hii*, or *I*—that is to say, the isle, *the* isle *par excellence*. Iona, according to various authors, means the blessed isle. This last word is written Iova by Adamnan and the ancient authors; but usage has turned it into Iona.

[3] To the south of Colonsay, not far from the large island of Islay.

could still see Ireland, his beloved country. To see far off that dear soil which he had left for ever, was too hard a trial. He came down from the hill, and immediately took to his boat to seek, farther off, a shore from which he could not see his native land. When he had reached Iona he climbed the highest point in the island, and, gazing into the distance, found no longer any trace of Ireland upon the horizon. He decided, accordingly, to remain upon this unknown rock. One of those heaps of stones, which are called *cairns* in the Celtic dialect, still marks the spot where Columba made this desiredly unfruitful examination, and has long borne the name of the Cairn of Farewell.[1]

Description of the isle of Iona.

Nothing could be more sullen and sad than the aspect of this celebrated isle, where not a single tree has been able to resist either the blighting wind or the destroying hand of man. Only three miles in length by two in breadth, flat and low, bordered by grey rocks which scarcely rise above the level of the sea, and overshadowed by the high and sombre peaks of the great island of Mull,[2]

[1] *Carn cul ri Erin*—literally, *the back turned on Ireland.* Many historians are of opinion that the isle had been formerly inhabited by Druids, whose burying-place is still shown—*Clachnan Druineach.* O'Donnell says that they resisted the landing of the Irish emigrants; but Dr Reeves contests this idea with very strong arguments. His edition of Adamnan contains a detailed map of Iona, with all the names of places in Celtic.

[2] "Where a turret's airy head
O'erlooked, dark Mull! thy mighty Sound,
Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore."
WALTER SCOTT, *Lord of the Isles*, i. 7.

it has not even the wild beauty which is conferred upon the neighbouring isles and shores by their basalt cliffs, which are often of prodigious height —or which belongs to the hills, often green and rounded at the summit, whose perpendicular sides are beaten incessantly by those Atlantic waves, which bury themselves in resounding caverns hollowed by the everlasting labours of that tumultuous sea. Upon the narrow surface of the island white stretches of sand alternate with scanty pastures, a few poor crops, and the turf-moors where the inhabitants find their fuel. Poor as the culture is, it seems everywhere resisted and disputed by the gneiss rocks, which continually crop out, and in some places form an almost inextricable labyrinth. The only attraction possessed by this sombre dwelling-place is the view of the sea, and of the mountains of Mull and the other islands, to the number of twenty or thirty, which may be distinguished from the top of the northern hill of Iona.[1] Among these is Staffa, celebrated for the grotto of Fingal, which has been known only for about a century, and which, in the time of Columba, moaned and murmured in its solitary and unknown majesty, in the midst of that Hebridean archipelago which is at present haunted by so many curious admirers of the Highland shores and ruined feudal castles, which the great

[1] This hill, the highest in the island, is only 320 feet above the level of the sea.

bard of our century has enshrined in the glory of his verse.[1]

The bay where Columba landed is still called the *bay of the osier bark, Port a Churraich;* and a long mound is pointed out to strangers as representing the exact size of his boat, which was sixty feet long. The emigrant did not remain in this bay, which is situated in the middle of the isle; he went higher up, and, to find a little shelter from the great sea winds, chose for his habitation the eastern shore, opposite the large island of Mull, which is separated from Iona only by a narrow channel of a mile in breadth, and whose highest mountains,[2] situated more to the east, approach and almost identify themselves with the mountain-tops of Morven, which are continually veiled with clouds. It was there that the emigrants built their huts of branches, for the island was not then, as now, destitute of wood.[3] When Columba had made up his mind to construct for himself and his people a settled establishment, the buildings of the new-born monastery were of the greatest simplicity. As in all Celtic constructions, walls of withes or branches,

First establishment of the new monastery.

[1] In the *Lord of the Isles* Scott has given a poetic itinerary of all the archipelago so frequented by St Columba. The powerful Celtic dynasties who, under the title of Lords of the Isles, ruled the Hebrides during the middle ages, were of the clan Macdonald: their sway extended over the district of Morven, which is the part of the mainland nearest to Iona.

[2] The highest mountain in Mull is 3178 feet in height.

[3] It is said that Columba retired *in saltibus* to pray. At present the inhabitants of Iona have no other wood than that which is thrown by the sea upon the beach. See in the Appendix No. 1 some notes upon the present condition of Iona.

supported upon long wooden props, formed the principal element in their architecture. Climbing plants, especially ivy, interlacing itself in the interstices of the branches, at once ornamented and consolidated the modest shelter of the missionaries.[1] The Irish built scarcely any churches of stone, and retained, up to the twelfth century, as St Bernard testifies, the habit of building their churches of wood. But it was not for some years after their first establishment that the monks of Iona permitted themselves the luxury of a wooden church; and when they did so, great oaks, such as the sterile and wind-beaten soil of their islet could not produce, had to be brought for its construction from the neighbouring shore.[2]

Thus the monastic capital of Scotland, and the centre of Christian civilisation in the north of Great Britain, came into being thirteen centuries ago. Some ruins of a much later date than the days of Columba, though still very ancient, mingled among a few cottages scattered on the shore, still point out the site.

"We were now treading," said, in the eighteenth century, the celebrated Johnson, who was the first

[1] "Virgarum fasciculos ad hospitium construendum. . . . Binales sudes."—ADAMNAN, ii. 3-7. Dr Reeves has put together several ancient authorities upon the materials of chapels and churches in Wales and Brittany. "Virgis torquatis muros perficientes . . . musco silvestri solum et hederæ nexibus adornato. . . . Virgas et fenum ad materiam cellæ construendæ . . ."

[2] "Cum roboreæ . . . duodecim currucis congregatis, materiæ ad nostrum renovandum traherentur monasterium."

to recall the attention of the British public to this profaned sanctuary—"we were now treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and from my friends, be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona!"[1]

Columba, who had been initiated into classic recollections, like all the monks of his time, had no doubt heard of Marathon; but certainly it could never have occurred to him that a day would come in which a descendant of the race he came to save should place his humble shelter in the same rank with the most glorious battle-field of Hellenic history.

Far from having any prevision of the glory of

[1] Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides.*

Iona, his soul was still swayed by a sentiment which never abandoned him—regret for his lost country. All his life he retained for Ireland the passionate tenderness of an exile, a love which displayed itself in the songs which have been preserved to us, and which date perhaps from the first moments of his exile. It is possible that their authenticity is not altogether beyond dispute; and that, like the poetic lamentations given forth by Fortunatus in the name of St Radegund,[1] they were composed by his disciples and contemporaries. But they have been too long repeated as his, and depict too well what must have passed in his heart, to permit us to neglect them. "Death in faultless Ireland is better than life without end in Albyn." After this cry of despair follow strains more plaintive and submissive. In one of his elegies[2] he laments that he can no longer sail on the lakes and bays of his native island, nor hear the song of the swans, with his friend Comgall. He laments above all to have been driven from Erin by his own fault, and because of the blood shed in his battles. He envies his friend Cormac, who can go back to his dear monastery at Durrow, and hear the wind sigh among the oaks, and the song of the blackbird and cuckoo. As for Columba, all is dear to him in Ireland *except the princes who reign there.* This last particular shows the persistence

Columba passionately regrets his country.

[1] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 300.

[2] Published by REEVES, Appendix, p. 275.

of his political rancour. No trace of this feeling, however, remains in a still more characteristic poem,[1] which must have been confided to some traveller as a message from the exile of Iona to his country. In this he celebrates, as always, the delight of voyaging round the coast of Ireland, and the beauty of its cliffs and beach. But, above all, he mourns over his exile :—

"What joy to fly upon the white-crested sea, and to watch the waves break upon the Irish shore! what joy to row the little bark, and land among the whitening foam upon the Irish shore! Ah! how my boat would fly if its prow were turned to my Irish oak-grove! But the noble sea now carries me only to Albyn,[2] the land of ravens. My foot is in my little boat, but my sad heart ever bleeds. There is a grey eye which ever turns to Erin; but never in this life shall it see Erin, nor her sons, nor her daughters.[3] From the high prow I look over the sea, and great tears are in my

[1] Reeves, p. 285-87. The original text of this poem is in very ancient Irish.

[2] *Alba, Albania*, is the name generally applied by Irish writers to that part of Great Britain which afterwards became Scotland. It is evidently the same as *Albion*, and later took the form of *Albany*, which has been always employed in the heraldic language of the two kingdoms as a title borne by the princes of the royal house. Everybody knows that the widow of Charles-Edward, when married a second time to Alfieri, called herself Countess of Albany.

[3] This seems to refer to a vow which he is said to have made at the moment of his departure, to see neither man nor woman of his country—a vow which he evaded on his journey to the national assembly of Drum-Ceitt by covering his eyes with a bandage, over which he drew his cowl.—Reeves.

grey eye when I turn to Erin—to Erin, where the songs of the birds are so sweet, and where the clerks sing like the birds: where the young are so gentle, and the old so wise: where the great men are so noble to look at, and the women so fair to wed. Young traveller, carry my sorrows with thee, carry them to Comgall of eternal life. Noble youth, take my prayer with thee, and my blessing: one part for Ireland—seven times may she be blessed! and the other for Albyn. Carry my blessing across the sea—carry it to the west. My heart is broken in my breast: if death comes to me suddenly, it will be because of the great love I bear to the Gael."[1]

His regret lasts all his life.

But it was not only in these elegies, repeated and perhaps retouched by Irish bards and monks, but at each instant of his life, in season and out of

[1] The *Gaoidhil* or *Gaëdhil*. This was the name which the Irish gave themselves before the Roman missionaries had given them the name of *Scoti*. It is generally argued that the best known and most authentic, though in our opinion the least interesting, of Columba's Latin poems, dates from the first years of his sojourn at Iona. It is called by the name of *Altus*, from the first word of the first verse—

"Altus prosator vetustus dierum et ingenitus."

It is composed of twenty-four stanzas. The first word of each verse begins with a different letter, in the order of the letters of the alphabet. Each verse comments in very imaginative language on a text of Scripture, indicated in the argument, on such subjects as the Creation, the Fall, Hell, the Last Judgment, &c. The argument (in Irish) of this poem expressly states that it was suggested to Columba by his desire to obtain the pardon of God for his three battles. The text has been published by Colgan. Dr Todd announces a more complete edition. Colgan states formally that the poem was composed at Iona. He adds that, according to some, the saint occupied some years in meditation on the subject before he wrote it; and that, according to others, he sent it to Pope Gregory the Great, who received it with the most sympathetic respect.

season, that this love and passionate longing for his native country burst forth in words and in musings; the narratives of his most trustworthy biographers are full of it. The most severe penance which he could imagine for the guiltiest sinners who came to confess to him, was to impose upon them the same fate which he had voluntarily inflicted upon himself—never to set foot again upon Irish soil.[1] But when, instead of forbidding to sinners all access to that beloved isle, he had to smother his envy of those who had the right and happiness to go there at their pleasure, he dared scarcely trust himself to name its name; and when speaking to his guests, or to the monks who were to return to Ireland, he could only say to them, "You will return to the country that you love."[2]

His solicitude for the stork which came from Ireland.

This melancholy patriotism never faded out of his heart, and was evidenced much later in his life by an incident which shows an obstinate regret for his lost Ireland, along with a tender and careful solicitude for all the creatures of God. One morning he called one of the monks and said to him, "Go and seat thyself by the sea, upon the western bank of the island; there thou wilt see arrive from the north of Ireland and fall at thy feet a poor travelling stork, long beaten by the winds and exhausted by fatigue. Take her up with pity, feed

[1] See further on an incident related by Adamnan, i. 22.

[2] "In tua quam amas patria . . . per multos eris annos."—ADAMN., i. 17.

her and watch her for three days; after three days' rest, when she is refreshed and strengthened, she will no longer wish to prolong her exile among us —she will fly to sweet Ireland, her dear country where she was born. I bid thee care for her thus, because she comes from the land where I, too, was born." Everything happened as he had said and ordered. The evening of the day on which the monk had received the poor traveller, as he returned to the monastery, Columba, asking him no questions, said to him, "God bless thee, my dear child, thou hast cared for the exile; in three days thou shalt see her return to her country." And, in fact, at the time mentioned the stork rose from the ground in her host's presence, and, after having sought her way for a moment in the air, directed her flight across the sea, straight upon Ireland.[1] The sailors of the Hebrides all know and tell this tale; and I love to think that among all my readers there is not one who would not fain have repeated or deserved Columba's blessing.

[1] "Nam de aquilonali Hiberniæ regione quædam hospita grus, valde fessa et fatigata, superveniet, coram te in litore cadens recumbet; quam misericorditer sublevare curabis, ad propinquam deportabis domum; et post expleto recreata triduo, nolens ultra apud nos peregrinari, ad priorem Scotiæ dulcem, unde orta, remeabit regionem . . . quam ideo tibi sic diligenter commendo, quia de nostræ paternitatis regione est oriunda. . . . Benedicat te Deus, mi fili, quia peregrinæ bene ministrasti hospitæ . . . quæ post ternos soles ad patriam repedabit . . . paulisperque in aere viam speculata . . . recti volatus cursu ad Hiberniam se repedavit tranquillo."—ADAMN., i. 48.

CHAPTER III.

THE APOSTOLATE OF COLUMBA AMONG THE SCOTS AND PICTS.

Moral transformation of Columba.—His progress in spiritual life.—His humility.—His charity.—His preaching by tears.—The hut which formed his abbatial palace at Iona.—His prayers; his work of transcription.—His crowd of visitors.—His severity in the examination of monastic vocations.—Aïdus the Black, the murderer of Columba's enemy King Diarmid, rejected by the community.—Penance of Libran of the Rushes.—Columba encourages the despairing and unmasks the hypocrites.—Monastic propaganda of Iona; Columba's fifty-three foundations in Scotland.—His relations with the people of Caledonia: First with the colony of Dalriadians from Ireland, whose king was his relative; he enlightens and confirms their imperfect Christianity.—Ambushes laid for his chastity.—His connection with the Picts, who occupied the north of Britain.—The *dorsum Britanniæ*.—Columba their first missionary.—The fortress gates of their king Brudus open before him.—He struggles with the Druids in their last refuge.—He preaches by an interpreter.—His respect for natural virtue.—Baptism of two old Pictish chiefs.—Columba's humanity: he redeems an Irish captive.—Frequent journeys among the Picts, whose conversion he accomplishes before he dies.—His fellow-workers, Malruve and Drostan; the Monastery of Tears.

However bitter the sadness might be with which exile filled the heart of Columba, it did not for a moment turn him from his work of expiation. As soon as he had installed himself with his companions in that desert isle, from whence the Christian faith and monastic life were about to radiate over

the north of Great Britain, a gradual and almost complete transformation became apparent in him. Without giving up the lovable peculiarities of his character and race, he gradually became a model for penitents, and at the same time for confessors and preachers. Without ceasing to maintain an authority which was to increase with years, and which does not seem ever to have been disputed, over the monasteries which he had founded in Ireland, he applied himself at once to establish, on the double basis of manual and intellectual labour, the new insular community which was to be the centre of his future activity. Then he proceeded to unite himself in friendly relations with the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts, whom it was needful to evangelise or confirm in the faith, before thinking of carrying the light of the Gospel further off to the north. He prepared himself for this grand mission by miracles of fervour and austerity, as well as humble charity, to the great profit in the first place of his own monks, and afterwards of the many visitors who came, whether from Ireland or from the Caledonian shores, to seek at his side the healing or the consolation of penitence.

Change in Columba: his progress in spiritual life.

This man, whom we have seen so passionate, so irritable, so warlike and vindictive, became little by little the most gentle, the humblest, the most tender of friends and fathers. It was he, the great head of the Caledonian Church, who, kneeling before the strangers who came to Iona, or before the monks

His humility and charity.

returning from their work, took off their shoes, washed their feet, and after having washed them respectfully kissed them. But charity was still stronger than humility in that transfigured soul. No necessity, spiritual or temporal, found him indifferent. He devoted himself to the solace of all infirmities, all misery, and pain, weeping often over those who did not weep for themselves.[1] These tears became the most eloquent part of his preaching, the means which he employed most willingly to subdue inveterate sinners, to arrest the criminal on the brink of the abyss, to appease and soften and change those wild and savage but simple and straightforward souls, whom God had given him to subdue.

In the midst of the new community Columba inhabited, instead of a cell, a sort of hut built of planks, and placed upon the most elevated spot within the monastic enclosure. Up to the age of seventy-six he slept there upon the hard floor, with no pillow but a stone. This hut was at once his study and his oratory. It was there that he gave himself up to those prolonged prayers which excited the admiration and almost the alarm of his disciples. It was there that he returned after sharing the outdoor labour of his monks,[2] like the least among them,

Prayer and work.

[1] "Cum laborantibus laborabat, cum infirmantibus infirmabatur, cum flentibus semper, et cum non flentibus sæpe flebat. . . . Quando vel pervicaces in nefarium aliquod facinus ruentes cohibere not poterat . . . lacrymas ubertim emittebat."—O'Donnell, lib. iii. c. 40.

[2] "Nullum horæ momentulum transibat, quo non pie occupatum reperiri potuerit. . . . In manuali laboratione cum aliis fratribus non secus ac eorum minimus, collaborabat."—O'Donnell, *Vita quinta*, iii. 37, 39.

to consecrate the rest of his time to the study of Holy Scripture and the transcription of the sacred text. The work of transcription remained until his last day the occupation of his old age as it had been the passion of his youth; it had such an attraction for him, and seemed to him so essential to a knowledge of the truth, that, as we have already said, three hundred copies of the Holy Gospels, copied by his own hand, have been attributed to him. It was in the same hut that he received with unwearied patience the numerous and sometimes importunate visitors who soon flowed to him, and of whom sometimes he complained gently—as of that indiscreet stranger, who, desirous of embracing him, awkwardly overturned his ink upon the border of his robe.[1] These importunate guests did not come out of simple curiosity; they were most commonly penitent or fervid Christians, who, informed by the fishermen and inhabitants of the neighbouring isles of the establishment of the Irish monk, who was already famous in his own country, and attracted by the growing renown of his virtues, came from Ireland, from the north and south of Britain, and even from the midst of the still heathen Saxons, to save their souls and gain heaven under the direction of a man of God.[2]

His crowd of visitors.

[1] "Tuguriolum hospitiolum, in eminentiore loco fabricatum, in quo vir beatus scribebat. . . . Hospes molestus supervenit, sanctumque osculandum appetens, ora vestimenti inclinatum effudit atramenti corniculum."—ADAMNAN, i. 25.

[2] Adamnan has among the list of the first companions of the holy

His scrupulous severity in the examination of monastic vocations.

Far from making efforts to attract or lightly admitting these neophytes, nothing in his life is more clearly established than the scrupulous severity with which he examined into all vocations, and into the admission of penitents. He feared nothing so much as that the monastic frock might serve as a shelter for criminals who sought in the cloister not only a place of penitence and expiation, but a shelter from human justice. On occasion he even blamed the too great facility of his friends and disciples. One of the latter, Finchan, had founded upon Eigg,[1] another Hebridean island, a community resembling that of Iona, and possibly dependent upon it: he had there admitted to clerical orders, and even to the priesthood, a prince of the clan of Picts established in Ireland, Aëdh or Aïdus, called the Black, a violent and bloodthirsty man, who had assassinated Diarmid, the king of Ireland. It was this king, as will be remembered, who pronounced the unjust sentence which drove Columba frantic, and was the occasion of all his faults and misfortunes. The abbot of Iona was not the less on this account indignant at the weakness of his friend. "The hand which Finchan has laid, in the face of all justice and ecclesiastical law, upon the head of this son of perdition,"

abbot the names of two Saxons, one of whom was a baker, and also that of a Briton, who died first of all the Iona monks. This was that Odhran or Orain who has left his name to the burying-ground, which is still called *Reilig Orain*. "Bonis actibus intentans qui primus apud nos in hac insula mortuus est."—ADAMNAN, iii. 6.

[1] To the north of Iona, near the large island of Skye.

said Columba, "shall rot and fall off, and be buried before the body to which it is attached. As for the false priest, the assassin, he shall himself be assassinated." This double prophecy was accomplished.[1]

Let us lend an ear to the following dialogue which Columba held with one of those who sought shelter under his discipline. It will explain the moral and spiritual condition of that age better than many commentaries, and will, besides, show the wonderful influence which Columba, penitent and exiled in the depths of his distant island, exercised over all Ireland. It was one day announced to him that a stranger had just landed from Ireland, and Columba went to meet him in the house reserved for guests, to talk to him in private, and question him as to his dwelling-place, his family, and the cause of his journey. The stranger told him that he had undertaken this painful voyage in order, under the monastic habit and in exile, to expiate his sins. Columba, desirous of trying the reality of his penitence, drew a most repulsive picture of the hardship and difficult obligations of the new life. "I am ready," said the stranger, "to submit to the most cruel and humiliating conditions that thou canst command me." And after having made

Libran of the Rushes.

[1] "Finchanus, Christi miles, Aïdum . . . regio genere ortum, Cruthinium gente, de Scotia ad Britanniam sub clericatus habitu secum adduxit. . . . Qui valde sanguinarius homo et multorum fuerat trucidator. . . . Darmitium totæ Scotiæ regnatorem Deo auctore ordinatum interfecerat. . . . Manus . . . contra fas et jus ecclesiasticum super caput filii perditionis, mox computrescet."—ADAMNAN, i. 36.

confession, he swore, still upon his knees, to accomplish all the requirements of penitence. "It is well," said the abbot; "now rise from thy knees, seat thyself, and listen: you must first do penance for seven years in the neighbouring island of Tiree, after which I will see you again." "But," said the penitent, still agitated by remorse, "how can I expiate a perjury of which I have not yet spoken? Before I left my own country I killed a poor man. I was about to suffer the punishment of death for that crime, and I was already in irons, when one of my relations, who is very rich, delivered me by paying the composition demanded. I swore that I would serve him all the rest of my life; but after some days of service I abandoned him, and here I am, notwithstanding my oath." Upon this the saint added that he would only be admitted to the paschal communion after seven years of penitence. When these were completed, Columba, after having given him the communion with his own hand, sent him back to Ireland to his patron, carrying a sword with an ivory handle for his ransom. The patron, however, moved by the entreaties of his wife, gave the penitent his pardon without ransom. "Why should we accept the price sent to us by the holy Columba? We are not worthy of it. The request of such an intercessor should be granted freely. His blessing will do more for us than any ransom." And immediately he detached the girdle from his waist, which

was the ordinary formula in Ireland for the manumission of captives or slaves. Columba had besides commanded his penitent to remain with his old father and mother until he had rendered to them the last services. This accomplished, his brothers let him go, saying, "Far be it from us to detain a man who has laboured for seven years for the salvation of his soul with the holy Columba." He then returned to Iona, bringing with him the sword which was to have been his ransom. "Henceforward thou shalt be called Libran, for thou art free, and emancipated from all ties," said Columba; and he immediately admitted him to take the monastic vows. But when he was commanded to return to Tiree, to end his life at a distance from Columba, poor Libran, who up to this moment had been so docile, fell on his knees and wept bitterly. Columba, touched by his despair, comforted him as best he could, without, however, altering his sentence. "Thou shalt live far from me, but thou shalt die in one of my monasteries, and thou shalt rise again with my monks, and have part with them in heaven," said the abbot. Such was the history of Libran, called Libran of the Rushes, because he had passed many years in gathering rushes —the years probably of his penitence.[1]

[1] "Libranus de *Arundineto* . . . plebeius nuper, sumpto clericatus habitu . . . ad delenda in peregrinatione peccamina longo fatigatum itinere. . . . Cui sanctus, ut de suæ pœnitudinis exploraret qualitate, dura et laboriosa ante oculos monasterialia proposuisset imperia. . . .

He encourages the penitents, and unmasks the hypocrites.

This doctor, learned in penitence, became day by day more gifted in the great art of ruling souls; and, with a hand as prudent as vigorous, raised up on one side the wounded and troubled conscience—while, on the other, he unveiled the false monks and false penitents. To a certain monk, who, in despair at having yielded during a journey to the temptations of a woman, rushed from confessor to confessor without ever finding himself sufficiently repentant or sufficiently punished, he restored peace and confidence, by showing him that his despair was nothing but an infernal hallucination, and by inflicting upon him a penance hard enough to convince him of the remission of his sin.[1] To another sinner from Ireland, who, guilty of incest and fratricide, had insisted, whether Columba pleased or not, on taking refuge in Iona, he imposed perpet-

Paratus sum ad omnia quæcumque mihi jubere volueris, quamlibet durissima, quamlibet indigna. . . . Surge et reside. . . . Quid agere oportet de quodam meo falso juramento? Nam in patria trucidavi homuncionem. . . . Machæram belluinis ornatam dolatis dentibus. . . . Ut quid nobis hoc accipere quod sanctus pretium misit Columba? Hoc non sumus digni . . . liberetur ei pius hic gratis ministrator. . . . Continuo gratis liberavit servum . . . cingulum ex more captivi de lumbis resolvens. . . . Ut tanto tempore patri debitam, sed neglectam redintegres pietatem. . . . Nullo modo nos oportet fratrem in patria retentare qui per septem annos apud S. Columbam in Britannia salutem exercuit animæ. . . . Tu Libranus vocaberis quod sis liber. . . . Qui ideo Arundineti est vocitatus, quia in arundineto multis annis arundines colligendo laboraverat." His death occured long after that of Columba, at Durrow, one of the first of the great abbot's foundations in Ireland.—ADAMNAN, ii. 39.

[1] "Magna est, o frater, hallucinatio tua. Ego quindecim tibi annos in pane et aqua jejunandos pro pœnitentia injungo, quo tibi vel ipsa pœnitentiæ gravitas persuadeat peccatum tuum esse remissum."—O'DONNELL, vol. i. c. 24.

ual exile from his native country, and twelve years of penance among the savages of Caledonia, predicting at the same time that the false penitent would perish in consequence of refusing this expiation.[1] Arriving one day in a little community formed by himself in one of the neighbouring islets,[2] and intended to receive the penitents during their time of probation, he gave orders that certain delicacies should be added to their usual repast, and that even the penitents should be permitted to enjoy them. One of the latter, however, more scrupulous than needful, refused to accept the improved fare, even from the hand of the abbot. "Ah!" said Columba, "thou refusest the solace which is offered to thee by thy superior and myself. A day will come when thou shalt again be a robber as thou hast been, and shalt steal, and eat the venison in the forests wherever thou goest." And this prophecy too was fulfilled.[3]

Notwithstanding these precautions, and his apparent severity, the number of neophytes who sought the privilege of living under the rule of Columba increased more and more. Every day, and every minute of the day, the abbot and his companions, in the retirement of their cells, or at their outdoor

[1] "Si duodecim annis inter Brittones cum fletu et lachrymis pœnitentiam egeris, nec ad Scotiam usque ad mortem reversus fueris, forsan Deus peccato ignoscat tuo."—ADAMNAN, i. 22.

[2] Himba, the modern name of which is unknown.

[3] "Ut etiam pœnitentibus aliqua præcipit consolatio indulgeretur. . . . Erit tempus quo cum furacibus furtive carnem in sylva manducabis."—ADAMNAN, i. 21.

labours, heard great cries addressed to them from the other side of the narrow strait which separates Iona from the neighbouring island of Mull. These shouts were the understood signal by which those who sought admission to Iona gave notice of their presence, that the boat of the monastery might be sent to carry them over.[1] Among the crowds who crossed in that boat some sought only material help, alms, or medicines; but the greater part sought permission to do penance, and to pass a shorter or longer time in the new monastery, where Columba put their vocation to so many trials. Once only was he known to have at the very moment of their arrival imposed, so to speak, the monastic vows upon two pilgrims, whose virtues and approaching death had been by a supernatural instinct revealed to him.[2]

Monastic propaganda of Iona. Foundations of Columba in Scotland.

The narrow enclosure of Iona was soon too small for the increasing crowd, and from this little monastic colony issued in succession a swarm of similar colonies, which went forth to plant new communities, daughters of Iona, in the neighbouring isles, and on the mainland of Caledonia, all of which were

[1] "Alia die, ultra fretum Ionæ insulæ clamatum est, quem sanctus, sedens in tuguriolo tabulis suffulto audiens, clamorem. . . . Mane eadem quarta feria, alius ultra fretum clamitabat proselytus. . . . Quadam die, quemdam ultra fretum audiens clamitantem, sanctus. . . . Valde miserandus est ille clamitans homo, qui aliqua ad carnalia medicamenta petiturus pertinentia, ad nos venit. . . . Ite, ait, celeriter peregrinosque de longinqua venientes regione, ad nos ocius adducite."—ADAMNAN, i. 25, 26, 27, 32, 43.

[2] "Apud me, ut dicitis, anni unius spatio peregrinari non poteritis, nisi prius monachicum promiseretis votum."—ADAMNAN, i. 32.

under the authority of Columba. Ancient traditions attribute to him the foundation of three hundred monasteries or churches, as many in Caledonia as in Hibernia, a hundred of which were in the islands or upon the sea-shore of the two countries. Modern learning has discovered and registered the existence of ninety churches, whose origin goes back to Columba, and to all or almost all of which, according to the custom of the time, monastic communities must have been attached.[1] Traces of fifty-three of these churches remain still in modern Scotland, unequally divided among the districts inhabited by the two races which then shared Caledonia between them.[2] Thirty-two are in the western isles, and the country occupied by the Irish-Scots, and the twenty-one others mark the principal stations of

[1] Jocelyn, in his *Vie de Saint Patrice*, c. 89, attributes a hundred to him; and this number is increased to three hundred by O'Donnell, book iii. c. 32. Colgan has named sixty-six of which Columba must have been, directly or indirectly, the founder (six more than St Bernard). Fifty-eight of these foundations were in Ireland. But Colgan regards as founded by him almost all the churches built in Scotland before his death in 597. Bede, iii. 4, seems to give Durrow and Iona as the only direct foundations of Columba, and the others as proceeding from these two: "Ex utroque monasterio plurima exinde monasteria per discipulos et in Britannia et in Scotia propagata sunt." But he evidently is in the wrong, so far at least as Derry is concerned. All the communities erected under the supremacy of the abbot of Iona bore the name of *Familia Columba-Cille*.

[2] The enumeration of Dr Reeves (Appendix H) might be much augmented, according to what he himself says. The thirty-two churches or monasteries *inter Scottos* comprehended those of the Hebridean isles, such as Skye, Mull, Oronsay, even down to the distant islet of St Kilda, one of the three churches of which bears his name. In those *inter Pictos* is included Inchcolm, an island near Edinburgh. These fifty-three, and the thirty-seven already brought to light by Dr Reeves, make very nearly the number of one hundred given by the author of the *Vie de Saint Patrice*.

the great missionary in the land of the Picts. The most enlightened judges among the Scotch Protestants agree in attributing to the teachings of Columba—to his foundations and his disciples—all the primitive churches, and the very ancient parochial division of Scotland.[1]

Connection of Columba with the population of Caledonia.

But it is time to tell what the population was whose confidence Columba had thus gained, and from which the communities of his monastic family were recruited. The portion of Great Britain which received the name of Caledonia did not include the whole of modern Scotland; it embraced only the districts to the north of the isthmus which separates the Clyde from the Forth, or Glasgow from Edinburgh. All this region to the north and to the east was in the hands of those terrible Picts whom the Romans had been unable to conquer, and who were the terror of the Britons. But to the west and south-west, on the side where Columba landed, he found a colony of his own country and race—that is to say, the Scots of Ireland, who were destined to become the sole masters of Caledonia, and to bestow upon it the name of Scotland.[2]

The Irish colony of Dalriadians in Scotland.

[1] See specially Cosmo Innes, the modest and learned author of the excellent works entitled *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, 1860, and *Sketches of Early Scottish History*, 1861.

[2] We again repeat what it required all the learning of Ussher, White, Colgan, and Ward to prove—namely, that the holy and learned Scotia of the ancients was Ireland. The name of Scotia became the exclusive possession of the Scotch—that is to say, of the Irish colonists in Caledonia—only in the eleventh or twelfth century, in the time of Giraldus Cambrensis, at the moment when the power of the true Scots declined in Scotland under the influence of the Anglo-Norman conquest.

More than half a century before, following in the train of many similar invasions or emigrations, a colony of Irish, or, according to the name then in use, of Scots, belonging to the tribe of Dalriadians,[1] had crossed the sea which separates the north-east coast of Ireland from the north-west of Great Britain, and had established itself—between the Picts of the north and the Britons of the south—in the islands and upon the western coast of Caledonia, north of the mouth of the Clyde, and in the district which has since taken the name of Argyll. The chiefs or kings of this Dalriadian colony, who were destined to become the parent stock of those famous and unfortunate Stuarts who once reigned over both Scotland and England, had at that time strengthened their growing power by the aid of the Niall princes who reigned in the north of Ireland, and to whose family Columba 500-503.

The Bollandists have applied the very appropriate name of *Scotia Nova* or *Hiberno-Scotia* to the Scotic colonies in Scotland.—*Vita S. Cadroë*, ap. Act. SS. Martii, vol. i. p. 473, and *Vita S. Domnani*, Act. SS. Aprilis, vol. ii. 487. The modern English also use a title historically exact in describing as North Britain the kingdom of Scotland since its union with England. M. Varin, in the papers which we have already quoted, has proved the obscurity of the political and religious origin of Caledonia. He remarks that, of the three primitive populations successively noted in that part of Great Britain, the only one which has retained its name is that which was the last to arrive upon the soil, which from it is still called Scotland. He is even disposed to believe that Ireland sometimes claimed for herself the credit of the civil and religious acts accomplished in her colony.

[1] These Dalriadians were themselves descended from Picts, who, under the name of *Cruithne* or *Cruithnii*, had long swayed a part of Ireland.—See Reeves, pp. 33, 67, and 94; O'Kelly, notes to the new edition of *Cambrensis Eversus*, of Lynch, vol. i. pp. 436, 463, 495. In Columba's time they still occupied the counties of Antrim and Down.

belonged. Columba had also a very close tie of kindred with the Dalriadians themselves, his paternal grandmother having been the daughter of Lorn, the first, or one of the first kings of the colony.[1] He was thus a relation of King Connal, the sixth successor of Lorn, who, at the moment of Columba's arrival, had been for three years the chief of the Scotic emigrants in Caledonia. Iona, where the abbot established himself, was at the northern extremity of the then very limited domain of the Dalriadians, and might be regarded as a dependency of their new state, not less than of that of the Picts, who occupied all the rest of Caledonia. Columba immediately entered into alliance with this prince. He visited him in his residence on the mainland, and obtained from him, in his double title of cousin and countryman, a gift of the uninhabited island where he had just established his community.[2]

Columba is related to their chiefs.

These Scots who had left Ireland after the conversion of the island by St Patrick were probably Christians, like all the Irish, at least in name ; but no certain trace of ecclesiastical organisation or of monastic institutions is visible among them before Columba's arrival at Iona. The apostolate of Ninian and of Palladius does not seem to have produced a durable impression upon them any more than upon the southern Picts.[3] A new apostolical

He enlightens and completes their imperfect Christianity.

[1] See the genealogical table of REEVES, p. 8, note 4.

[2] TIGHERNACH, *Annales ;* ADAMNAN, 574, i. 7.

[3] This explains the name of *apostates* given by St Patrick to the Scots

enterprise by Celtic monks was necessary to renew the work at which the Roman missionaries had laboured a century before.[1] Columba and his disciples neglected no means of fortifying and spreading religion among their countrymen, who were emigrants like themselves. We see him in the narratives of Adamnan administering baptism and the other rites of religion to the people of Scotic race, through whose lands he passed, planting there the first foundations of monastic communities. Many narratives, more or less legendary, indicate that this people, even when Christian, had great need to be instructed, directed, and established in the good way; while at the same time the Dalriadians showed a certain suspicion and doubt of the new apostle of their race, which only yielded to the prolonged influence of his self-devotion and unquestionable virtue.

Columba was still in the flower of his age when he established himself at Iona; he was not more at the most than forty-two. All testimonies agree in celebrating his manly beauty, his remarkable height, his sweet and sonorous voice, the cordiality of his manner, the gracious dignity of his deportment and person.[2] These external advantages,

and Picts of his time—"Socii Scotorum atque Pictorum apostatarum . . pessimorum atque apostatarum Pictorum."

[1] The Irish Scots, newly converted, reconquered to Christianity the Scots of Caledonia. The Picts, forgetful of Ninian and of Rome, received the gospel the second time from Hibernia in the name of Britain.—VARIN, 2d paper.

[2] "Erat aspectu angelicus. . . . Omnibus carus, hilarem semper faciem

added to the fame of his austerities and the inviolable purity of his life, made a singular and varied impression upon the pagans and the very imperfect Christians of Caledonia. The Dalriadian king put his virtue to the proof by presenting to him his daughter, who was remarkably beautiful, and clothed in the richest ornaments. He asked if the sight of a creature so beautiful and so adorned did not excite some inclination in him. "Without doubt," answered the missionary, "the inclination of the flesh and of nature; but understand well, lord king, that not for all the empire of the world, even could its honours and pleasures be secured to me to the end of time, would I yield to my natural weakness."[1] About the same time, a woman who lived not far from Iona spread for him a more dan-

His chastity put to trial by the king and by a neighbour.

ostendens . . . cujus alta proceritas. . . ."—ADAMN., *Præf.*, and i. 1. "Vir tantæ deditus austeritati . . . tamen exteriori forma et corporis habitu speciosus, genis rubicundus et vultu hilaris . . . semper apparebat et omnibus. . . . Colloquio affabilem, benignum, jucundum et interior is lætitiæa Spiritu Sancto infusæ indicia, hilari vultu prodentem se semper exhibebat."—O'DONNELL, *Vita quinta*, l. iii. c. 43.

[1] "Puellam valde speciosam purpura, auro, gemmis, aliisque id generis regii amictus ornamentis . . . exornatam . . . coram S. Columba sistit. . . . Percontatus an filiæ et pulchritudo et ornatus placeant. Respondit sanctus omnino placere. Iterum compellat an non etiam ejus formæ ducatur complacentia. . . . Respondit se natura ad talem complacentiam propensum esse. Ecce, inquit rex . . . hiccine est qui nullo carnali desiderio inquinatus deprædicatur? Tunc S. Columba . . . O rex, sciat altitudo tua, et si insita carnis propensio meam naturam ad prohibitas inclinet complacentias, pro universi tamen imperio, honoribus et voluptatibus, si usque mundi finem ad concederetur, me nolle talibus complacenter indulgere."—O'DONNELL, lib. ii. c. 39. The king who figures in this anecdote does not appear to have been Aïdan, as O'Donnell would assert. Aïdan began to reign over the Scotic colony only in 574, eleven years after the arrival of Columba at Iona. It must have been his predecessor Connell.

gerous and subtle snare. The celebrated and handsome exile having inspired her with a violent and guilty passion, she conceived the idea of seducing him, and succeeded in drawing him to her house. But as soon as he understood her design, he addressed to her an exhortation upon death and the last judgment, which he ended by blessing her, and making the sign of the cross. The temptress was thus delivered even from her own temptations. She continued to love him, but with a religious respect. It is added that she herself became a model of holiness.[1]

Columba becomes the missionary of the Northern Picts. 555 575.

But it was towards another race, very different from his Scotic countrymen and much less accessible, that Columba felt himself drawn as much by the penance imposed upon him as by the necessities of the Church and of Christendom. While the Irish Scots occupied the islands and part of the western coast of Caledonia, all the north and east—that is to say, by far the greater part of the country—was inhabited by the Picts, who were still heathens. Originally from Sarmatia, according to Tacitus—according to Bede, descendants of the Scythians—these primitive inhabitants of Great Britain, who had remained untouched by Roman

The Picts.

[1] "Ipsum in Ionam jam commorantem, multisque . . . percelebrem. . . . Quamdam de vicino feminam S. viri concupiscentia inflammat (antiquus serpens). . . . Deinde eam aucto crucis signo benedicens, ab omni mox tentatione liberam dimisit. . . . Casto deinceps amore, magnaque reverentia coluit, ipsa tandem sanctitate celebris."—O'Donnell, lib. ii. c. 25.

or Christian influences, owed their name to their custom of fighting naked, and of painting their bodies in various colours, which had been the wont of all the ancient Britons at the time of Cæsar's invasion. We have already seen that the holy bishop Ninian more than a century before had preached the Christian faith to the Southern Picts[1]—that is to say, to those who lived on the banks of the Forth or scattered among the Britons in the districts south of that river. But while even the traces of Ninian's apostolic work seemed at that moment effaced, although destined afterwards to reappear, the great majority of the Picts—those who inhabited the vast tracts to the north of the Grampians, into which no missionary before Columba had ever dared to penetrate[2]—had always continued heathen. The thirty-four years of life which Columba had still before him were chiefly spent in missions, undertaken for the purpose of carrying the faith to the hilly straths, and into the deep glens and numerous islands of northern Caledonia. There dwelt a race, warlike, grasping, and bold, as inaccessible to softness as to fear, only half clothed notwithstanding the severity of the climate, and obstinately attached to their customs, belief, and chiefs. The missionary had to preach, to convert, and even at need to brave those formidable tribes, in whom Tacitus

[1] Book viii. chap. 1.

[2] "Primus doctor fidei Christianæ transmontanis Pictis ad Aquilonem." —Bede, v. 9. "Gentem illam verbo et exemplo ad fidem Christi convertit."—*Ibid.*, iii. 4.

recognised the farthest off of the earth's inhabitants, and the last champions of freedom—"*terrarum ac libertatis extremos;*" those barbarians who, having gloriously resisted Agricola, drove the frightened Romans from Britain, and devastated and desolated the entire island up to the arrival of the Saxons; and whose descendants, after filling the history of Scotland with their feats of arms, have given, under the name of *Highlanders*, to the fallen Stuarts their most dauntless defenders, and to modern England her most glorious soldiers.

Columba crossed again and again that central mountain range in which rise those waters which flow, some north and west to fall into the Atlantic Ocean, and some to the south to swell the North Sea—a range which the biographer of the saint calls the backbone of Britain (*dorsum Britanniæ*), and which separates the counties of Inverness and Argyll, as now existing, from the county of Perth, and includes the districts so well known to travellers under the names of Breadalbane, Atholl, and the Grampians. This was the recognised boundary between the Scots and Picts,[1] and it was here that

[1] Such at least is the assertion of Adamnan, ii. 46. But his contemporary Bede and all modern authors give another frontier. According to the latter, the Scots extended through all the west of the Caledonian peninsula, and the Southern Picts occupied, to the south of the Grampians, the counties of Perth, Forfar, and Fife. See the map of Scotland in the eleventh century, in the *Sketches of Early Scotch History*, by Cosmo Innes. "Prædicaturus verbum Dei provinciis septentrionalium Pictorum, hoc est, eis quæ arduis atque horrentibus montium jugis ab australibus eorum sunt regionibus sequestratæ."—Bede, iii. 4.

the ancestors of the latter, the heroic soldiers of Galgacus, had held their ground against the father-in-law of Tacitus, who even when victorious did not venture to cross that barrier.[1] Often, too, Columba followed the course of that long valley of waters which, to the north of these mountains, traverses Scotland diagonally from the south-west, near Iona, to the north-east beyond Inverness. This valley is formed by a series of long gulfs and of inland lakes which modern industry has linked together, making it possible for boats to pass from one sea to the other without making the long round by the Orcadian Isles. Thirteen centuries ago religion alone could undertake the conquest of those wild and picturesque regions, which a scanty but fierce and suspicious population disputed with the fir-forests and vast tracts of fern and heather, which are still to be encountered there.

The first glance thrown by history upon this watery highway discovers there the preaching and miracles of Columba. He was the first to traverse in his little skiff Loch Ness and the river which issues from it; he penetrated thus, after a long and painful journey, to the principal fortress of the Pictish king, the site of which is still shown upon a rock north of the town of Inverness. This powerful and redoubtable monarch, whose name was Bruidh or Brude, son of Malcolm, gave at first a very inhospitable reception to the Irish missionary. The

[1] Walter Scott, *History of Scotland*, c. 1.

companions of the saint relate that, priding himself upon the royal magnificence of his fortress, he gave orders that the gates should not be opened to the unwelcome visitor; but this was not a command to alarm Columba. He went up to the gateway, made the sign of the cross upon the two gates, and then knocked with his hand. Immediately the bars and bolts drew back, the gates rolled upon their hinges and were thrown wide open, and Columba entered like a conqueror. The king, though surrounded by his council, among whom no doubt were his heathen priests, was struck with panic; he hastened to meet the missionary, addressed to him pacific and encouraging words, and from that moment gave him every honour.[1] It is not recorded whether Bruidh himself became a Christian, but during all the rest of his life he remained the friend and protector of Columba. He confirmed to him the possession of Iona, the sovereignty of which he seems to have disputed with his rival the king of the Dalriadian Scots, and our exile thus saw his establishment

He overcomes the resistance of King Bruidh.

[1] "Bridio rege potentissimo."—BEDE, iii. 4. "In prima sancti fatigatione itineris ad regem Brudeum . . . ex fastu elatus regio munitionis suæ superbe agens . . . homo Dei, cum comitibus, ad valvas portarum accedens . . . tunc manum pulsans contra ostia, quæ continuo sponte, retro retrusis fortiter seris, cum omni celeritate aperta sunt. Rex cum senatu valde pertimescunt."—ADAMN., i. c. 35. It is supposed that this royal fortress occupied the site of the vitrified fort of *Craig Pharrick*, on a rock 1200 feet above the Ness, near its embouchure into the Moray Firth. These *vitrified* walls—that is to say, walls the stones of which have been dipped, instead of cement, into a vitreous substance produced by the action of fire—are to be found in some districts of Brittany and of Maine, and are everywhere imputed to the Celtic period.

placed under the double protection of the two powers which shared Caledonia between them.[1]

Struggles with the Druids in their last refuge.

But the favour of the king did not bring with it that of the heathen priests, who are indicated by the Christian historians under the name of Druids or Magi, and who made an energetic and persevering resistance to the new apostle. These priests do not seem either to have taught or practised the worship of idols, but rather that of natural forces, and especially of the sun and other celestial bodies. They followed or met the Irish preacher in his apostolic journeys, less to refute his arguments than to hold back and intimidate those whom his preaching gained to Christ. The religious and supernatural character which was attributed by the Druids of Gaul to the woods and ancient trees, was attached by those of Caledonia to the streams and fountains, some of which were, according to their belief, salutary and beneficial, while others were deadly to man. Columba made special efforts to forbid among the new Christians the worship of sacred fountains, and, braving the threats of the Druids, drank in their presence the water which they affirmed would kill any man who dared to put it to his lips.[2] But they used no actual violence against the stranger whom their prince had taken

[1] "Quæ videlicet insula ad jus quidem Britanniæ pertinet, sed donatione Pictorum qui illas Britanniæ plagas incolunt, jamdudum monachis Scotorum tradita, eo quod illis prædicantibus fidem Christi perceperint. . . . Unde et Columba . . . præfatam insulam ab eis in possessionem monasterii faciendi accepit."—Bede, iii. 3, 4. Compare Reeves, p. 76.

[2] Adamnan, ii. 2.

under his protection. One day, when Columba and his monks came out of the enclosure of the fort in which the king resided, to chant vespers according to the monastic custom, the Druids attempted to prevent them from singing, lest the sound of the religious chants should reach the people; but the abbot instantly intoned the sixty-fourth psalm, "*Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum: dico opera mea regi*," with so formidable a voice, that he reduced his adversaries to silence, and made the surrounding spectators, and even the king himself, tremble before him.[1]

He preaches by an interpreter.

But he did not confine himself to chanting in Latin; he preached. The dialect of the Picts, however, being different from that of the Scots, and unknown to him, it was necessary to employ the services of an interpreter.[2] But his words were not the less efficacious on this account, though everywhere he was met by the rival exhortations or derisions of the pagan priests. His impassioned nature, as ready to love as to hate, made itself as apparent in his apostolic preachings as formerly

[1] "Dum cum paucis fratribus extra regis munitionem vespertinales Dei laudes ex more celebraret, quidam Magi."

[2] "Verbum vitæ per interpretatorem sancto prædicante viro."—ADAMN., ii. 32. Bede states that there were five different languages spoken in Great Britain, and compares them with the five books of the Pentateuch. "Anglorum videlicet" (that is to say, the Anglo-Saxons), "Britonum, Scottorum, Pictorum et Latinorum quæ meditatione Scripturarum cæteris omnibus est facta communis."—*Hist. Eccl.*, i. 1. This text, which is so important for the history of philology, is not less important as a proof to what point the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures had already spread among the Catholic nations.

in the struggles of his youth; and ties of tender intimacy, active and never appealed to in vain, were soon formed between himself and his converts. One of the Picts, who, having heard him preach by his interpreter, was converted with his wife and all his family, became his friend, and received many visits from him. One of the sons of this new convert fell dangerously ill: the Druids profited by the misfortune to reproach the anxious parents, making it appear that the sickness of their child was the punishment of their apostasy, and boasting the power of the ancient gods of the country, as superior to that of the Christian's God. Columba having been informed hastened to his friend's aid: when he arrived the child had just expired. As soon as he had done all that in him lay to console the father and mother, he asked to be allowed to enter alone into the place where the body of the child was. There he kneeled down and prayed long, bathed in tears; then rising, he said, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, return to life and arise!" At the same moment the soul came back to the child's body. Columba helped him to rise, supported him, led him out of the cabin, and restored him to his parents. The power of prayer was thus as great, says Adamnan, in our saint as in Elijah and Elisha under the old law, or in St Peter, St Paul, and St John under the new.[1]

[1] "Quidam plebeius" (this term is always used by Adamnan to express a layman, but at the same time a man either rich or of consideration). . . .

His respect for natural virtue.

While thus preaching faith and the grace of God by the voice of an interpreter, he at the same time recognised, admired, and proclaimed among those savage tribes the lights and virtues of the law of nature. He discovered the rays of its radiance in many an unknown hearer, by the help of that supernatural gift which enabled him to read the secrets of the heart, and to penetrate the darkness of the future; a gift which developed itself more and more in him as his apostolical career went on. One day while labouring in his evangelical work in the principal island of the Hebrides, the one which lies nearest to the mainland,[1] he cried out all at once, "My sons, to-day you will see an ancient Pictish chief, who has kept faithfully all his life the precepts of the natural law, arrive in this island; he comes to be baptised and to die." Immediately after, a boat was seen to approach the shore with a feeble old man seated in the prow, who was recognised as the chief of one of the neighbouring tribes. Two of his companions took him up in their arms and brought him before the missionary, to whose words, as repeated by the interpreter, he listened attentively. When the discourse was ended the old man asked to be baptised; and

Baptism of the old Pictish chief in the isle of Skye.

"Magi parentibus sæpe cum magna exprobratione cœperunt illudere, suosque quasi fortiores magnificare deos, Christianorum Deo quasi infirmiori derogare. . . . Hoc noster Columba cum Elia et Eliseo. . . . Petro et Paulo et Joanni . . . habebat sibi commune virtutis miraculum."—ADAMNAN, ii. 32.

[1] Skye, the same in which Charles-Edward took refuge in 1746, after the defeat of Culloden, and where he met Flora Macdonald.

immediately after breathed his last breath, and was buried in the very spot where he had just been brought to shore.[1]

At a later date, in one of his last missions, when, himself an old man, he travelled along the banks of Loch Ness, always in the district to the north of the mountain-range of the *dorsum Britanniæ*, he said to the disciples who accompanied him, "Let us make haste and meet the angels who have come down from heaven, and who wait for us beside a Pict who has done well according to the natural law during his whole life to extreme old age: we must baptise him before he dies." Then hastening his steps and outstripping his disciples, as much as was possible at his great age, he reached a retired valley, now called Glen Urquhart, where he found the old man who awaited him. Here there was no longer any need of an interpreter, which makes it probable that Columba in his old age had learned the Pictish dialect. The old Pict heard him preach, was baptised, and with joyful serenity gave up to God the soul which was awaited by those angels whom Columba saw.[2]

And in Glen Urquhart.

[1] "O filii, hodie in hac terrula quidam gentilis senex naturale per totam bonum custodiens vitam, et baptizabitur et morietur. . . . Navicula cujus in prora advectus est decrepitus senex Geonæ primarius cohortis, quem bini juvenes de navi sublevantes, ante beati conspectum viri deponunt. . . . Verbo Dei a sancto per interpretem recepto. . . ." —ADAMNAN, i. 33.

[2] "Ultra Britanniæ dorsum iter agens. . . . Properemus sanctis obviam angelis qui de cœlis ad præferendam alicujus gentilici animam emissi nos illuc expectant, ut ipsum naturale bonum per totam vitam usque ad extremam senectutem conservantem, priusquam moriatur, opportune

In this generous heart humanity claimed its rights no less than justice. It was in the name of humanity.[1] his biographer expressly tells us, that he begged the freedom of a young female slave, born in Ireland, and the captive of one of the principal Druids or Magi. This Druid was named Broïchan, and lived with the king, whose foster-father[2] he was, a tie of singular force and authority among the Celtic nations. Either from a savage pride, or out of enmity to the new religion, the Druid obstinately and cruelly refused the prayer of Columba. "Be it so," said the apostle; "but learn, Broïchan, that if thou refusest to set free this foreign captive, thou shalt die before I leave the province." When he had said this he left the castle, directing his steps towards that river Ness which appears so often in his history. But he was

His humanity.

baptizemus. . . . Sanctus senex in quantum potuit comites festinus præcedebat . . . et credens baptizatus est et continuo lætus et securus, cum angelis observantibus, ad Deum commigravit."—ADAMNAN, iii. 14.

[1] "Scoticam postulavit servam . . . humanitatis miseratione liberandam."—*Ibid.*, ii. 33.

[2] The reciprocal duties of foster fathers and children (fosterage) were minutely regulated by the British laws.

In the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis still remarked that among the Irish foster brothers and sisters were united by a tie almost stronger and more tender than brothers and sisters of the same blood. Dr Lynch, in his *Cambrensis Eversus* (first published in 1662, and re-edited by Prof. Kelly in 1850), enlarges upon the importance of the tie which united the Irish princes and lords to their foster fathers and brothers. He recalls Mordecai the foster-father of Esther, and Clitus, the foster-brother of Alexander the Great, among many examples of sacred and profane history which support his idea. His new editor asserts (ii. 141, 162) that at the Council of Trent the Irish bishop of Raphoe, Donald MacCongal, demonstrated that *fosterage* and *gossipred* (cognatio spiritualis) were the principal safeguard of the public peace in Ireland.

soon overtaken by two horsemen who came from the king to tell him that Broïchan, the victim of an accident, was dying, and fully disposed to set the young Irish girl free. The saint took up from the river bank a pebble, which he blessed, and gave to two of his monks, with the assurance that the sick man would be healed by drinking water in which this stone had been steeped, but only on the express condition that the captive should be delivered. She was immediately put under the charge of Columba's companions, and was thus restored at the same moment to her country and her freedom.[1]

The Druid, though healed, was not thereby rendered less hostile to the apostle. Like the magicians of Pharaoh, he attempted to raise nature and her forces against the new Moses. On the day fixed for his departure, Columba found, on reaching, followed by a numerous crowd, the banks of the long and narrow lake from which the Ness issues, and by which he meant to travel, a strong contrary wind and thick fog, as Broïchan had threatened, which the Druids exulted to see. But Columba, entering his boat, bade the frightened rowers set the sail against the wind, and the assembled people saw him proceed rapidly on his

[1] "Scito, Broichane, scito quia si mihi hanc peregrinam liberare captivam nolueris, priusquam de hac revertar provincia, citius morieris. . . . Nunc formidabiliter correptus ancillulam liberare est paratus . . . eademque hora liberata famula sancti legatis viri assignatur."—ADAMNAN, ii. 33.

course, as if borne by favourable breezes, towards the south end of the lake, by which he returned to Iona. But he left only to make a speedy return, and came so often as to accomplish the conversion of the Pictish nation, by destroying for ever the authority of the Druids in this last refuge of Celtic paganism.[1] This sanguinary and untamable race was finally conquered by the Irish missionary. Before he ended his glorious career he had sown their forests, their defiles, their inaccessible mountains, their savage moors, and scarcely inhabited islands, with churches and monasteries.

He completes in his life the conversion of the Picts.

Columba's assistants, in his numerous missions among the Picts, were the monks who had come with him, or who had followed him from Ireland. The fame of the obscure benefactors and civilisers of so distant a region has still more completely disappeared than that of Columba: it is with difficulty that some lingering trace of them is to be disentangled from the traditions of some churches whose sites may yet be found upon the ancient maps of Scotland. Such was Malruve (642-722[2]), a kinsman of Columba, and like him de-

His fellow-workers.

[1] "Ventum tibi contrarium caliginemque umbrosam superinducam. . . . Christum invocat, cymbulamque ascendens nautis hæsitantibus, ipse constanter factus velum contra ventum jubet subrigi . . . omnique inspectante turba, navigium flatus contra adversos mira occurrit velocitate."—ADAMNAN, ii. 34. The place where he landed is at present occupied by Fort-Augustus, at the commencement of the Caledonian Canal.

[2] W. REEVES, *St Maelrubha, his History and Churches.* Edinburgh, 861. Compare *Act. SS. Bolland.*, vol. vi. August, p. 132.

scended from the royal race of Niall, but educated in the great Monastery of Bangor, which he left to follow his illustrious cousin into Albyn, passing by Iona. He must have long survived Columba, for he was for fifty-one years abbot of a community at Apercrossan,[1] upon the north-west coast of Caledonia, opposite the large island of Skye, before he met his death, which was, according to local tradition, by the sword of Norwegian pirates.

Upon the opposite shore, in that striking promontory which forms the eastern extremity of Scotland, a district now known as Buchan, various churches trace their origin to Columba, and to one of his Irish disciples called Drostan. The *mor-maer* or chief of the country had at first refused them his permission to settle there, but his son fell dangerously ill, and he hastened after the missionaries, offering them the land necessary for their foundation, and begging them to pray for the dying boy. They prayed, and the child was saved. After having blessed the new church, and predicted that none who profaned it should ever conquer their enemies or enjoy long life, Columba installed his companions in their new home, and himself turned to continue his journey. When Drostan saw himself thus condemned to live at a distance from his master, he could not restrain his tears; for these old saints, in their wild and laborious career, loved each other

[1] At present Applecross. Twenty-one parishes in the north of Scotland were in primitive times dedicated to this saint.

with a passionate tenderness, which is certainly not the least touching feature in their character, and which places an inextinguishable light upon their heads amid the darkness of the legends. "Then," Columba said, "let us call this place the Monastery of Tears;"[1] and the great abbey which lasted a thousand years upon that spot always retained the name. "He who sows in tears shall reap in joy."

The Monastery of Tears.

[1] Said Columb-Cille: "Let *Déar* (Tear) be its name henceforward." This incident is found in the Celtic language in the most ancient manuscript which exists relative to Scotland; it has been recently discovered in Cambridge, and is of the ninth century. It is about to be published under the name of the *Book of Deir*. Cosmo Innes, *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, p. 325. Whitley Stokes, *Saturday Review*, 8th December 1860. The Monastery of Deir was rebuilt for the Cistercians by the Earl of Buchan in 1213. The prophecy of Columba was verified in the family of the Earl Marischal, head of the great house of Keith, who was, after the Reformation, the first spoliator of the monastery, which had been given to him by James VI. In vain his wife, a daughter of Lord Home, begged him not to accept the sacrilegious gift. He would not listen to her. The following night she saw in a dream a multitude of monks, clothed like those of Deir, surround the principal castle of the Earl, Dunnotter-Craig, which was situated on an immense rock on the coast. They began to demolish the rock with no other tools than *penknives:* at this sight the Countess hastened to look for her husband, that he might stop their work of destruction; but when she returned, the rock and the castle had already been undermined and overthrown by the penknives of the monks, and nothing was to be seen but the fragments of the furniture floating on the sea. This vision was immediately interpreted as the announcement of a future catastrophe, and the use of penknives as a sign of the length of time which should pass before its fulfilment. From that moment this powerful house began to diminish, and finally fell in 1715 in the Stuart rebellion.

CHAPTER IV.

COLUMBA CONSECRATES THE KING OF THE SCOTS.—HE GOES TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF IRELAND, DEFENDS THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE HIBERNO-SCOTIC COLONY, AND SAVES THE CORPORATION OF BARDS.

Passionate solicitude of Columba for his relatives and countrymen.—He protects King Aïdan in his struggle with the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria.—The same king is crowned by Columba at Iona; the first example of a Christian consecration of kings.—The Stone of Destiny: the descendants of Aïdan.—Synod or parliament of Drumceitt in Ireland.—Aedh, king of Ireland, and Aïdan, king of the Irish colonists in Scotland.—The independence of the new Scottish kingdom is recognised through the influence of Columba.—He interposes in favour of the bards, whom the king had proposed to outlaw.—Power and excesses of that corporation.—By means of Columba, the good grain is not burned with the weeds.—The bards' song of gratitude in honour of their saviour.—Columba, reproved by his disciple, desires that this song should not be repeated during his life.—Superstitious regard attached to it after his death.—Intimate union between music, poetry, and religion in Ireland.—The bards, transformed into minstrels, are the first champions of national independence and Catholic faith against the English conquest.—Fiercely assailed, they yet continue to exist up to our own day.—Moore's *Irish Melodies*.—The Celtic muse at the service of the vanquished in the Highlands of Scotland as in Ireland.

It would not, however, be natural to suppose that the mission of Columba among the Picts could entirely absorb his life and soul. That faithful love for his race and country which had moved

him with compassion for the young Irish girl in captivity among the Picts did not permit him to remain indifferent to the wars and revolutions which were at the bottom of all national life among the Irish Scots as well as the Irish colony in Scotland. There was not a more marked feature in his character than his constant solicitude, his compassionate sympathy, as well after as before his removal to Iona, for the bloody struggles in which his companions and relatives in Ireland were so often engaged. Nothing was nearer to his heart than the claim of kindred; for that reason alone he occupied himself without cease with the affairs of individual relatives. "This man," he said to himself, "is of my race; I must help him. It is my duty to pray for him, because he is of the same stock as myself. This other is of kin to my mother," &c. And then he would add, "My friends and kindred, who are descended like me from the Nialls, see how they fight!"[1] And from the far distance of his desert isle he fought with them in heart and thought, as of old he had aided them in person. He breathed from afar the air of battle; he divined the issue by what his companions considered a prophetic instinct, and told it to his monks, to his Irish countrymen, and to the Caledonian Scots who sought him in his new dwelling. With better reason still his soul

Anxious solicitude of Columba for his relatives and countrymen.

1 "Quia est mihi cognationalis, et ex meæ matris parentela. . . . Mei cognationales amici. . . . Nellis nepotes."—ADAMN., ii. 40; i. 49; i. 7.

kindled within him when he foresaw any struggle in which his new neighbours the Dalriadian colonists were to be engaged, either with the Picts, whom they were one day to conquer, or with the Anglo-Saxons.

The bell of Iona rings for the battle between the Scots and their enemies.

One day towards the end of his life, being alone with Diarmid his minister (as the monk attached to his personal service was called), he cried out all at once, "The bell! let the bell be rung instantly!" The bell of the modest monastery was nothing better than one of the little square bells made of beaten iron, which are still shown in Irish museums, exactly similar to those which are worn by the cattle in Spain and the Jura. It was enough for the necessities of the little insular community. At its sound the monks hastened to throw themselves on their knees around their father. "Now," said he, "let us pray—let us pray with intense fervour for our people, and for King Aïdan: for at this very moment the battle has begun between them and the barbarians." When their prayers had lasted some time, he said, "Behold, the barbarians flee! Aïdan is victorious!"[1]

[1] "Subito ad suum dicit ministratorem Diormitium, *Cloccam pulsa*. . . . Nunc intente pro hoc populo et Aidano rege oremus; hac cum hora incipiunt bellum. . . . Nunc barbari in fugam vertuntur, Aidanoque quanquam infelix concessa victoria."—ADAMN., i. 8. This *quanquam infelix* refers to the fact that in this battle, *de bello Miathorum* (as this chapter of Adamnan is entitled), the king lost three hundred and three men and two of his sons. His third son also fell in battle against the Saxons: "In Saxonia Celtica in strage."—*Ibid.*, c. 9. Adamnan speaks of the war as *de bello Miathorum*, but he does not explain if these *Miathi*, or *Meæ*, who are always associated with the Caledonians, were the allies or the enemies of the Dalriadian Scots.

The barbarians, against whom Columba rang his bells and called for the prayers of his monks, were the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria, who were still pagans, and whose descendants were destined to owe the inestimable blessings of Christianity to the monks of Iona and the spiritual posterity of Columba. But at that time the invaders thought only of taking a terrible revenge for the evils which Britain, before they conquered it, had endured from Scoto-Pictish incursions, and of extending their power ever farther and farther on the Caledonian side. As for King Aïdan,[1] he had replaced his cousin-german, King Connall, who had guaranteed to Columba the possession of Iona, as chief of the Dalriadian colony in Argyll. His accession to the throne took place in 574, eleven years after the arrival of Columba; and nothing proves more fully the influence acquired by the Irish missionary during this short interval than Aïdan's resolution to have his coronation blessed by the Abbot of Iona. Columba, though his friend, did not wish him to be king, preferring his brother; but an angel appeared to him three times in succession, and commanded him to consecrate Aïdan according to the ceremony prescribed in a book covered with crystal which was left with him for that purpose.[2] Columba, who was then in a

Aïdan, king of the Caledonian Scots, 574.

1 "Ædan, rex Scottorum qui Britanniam inhabitant."—Bede, i. 34.

2 "Qui in manu vitreum ordinationis regum habebat librum."—Adamn., iii. 5. This is the famous *Vitreus Codex* which, according to a

neighbouring island, went back to Iona, where he was met by the new king. The abbot, obedient to the celestial vision, laid his hands upon the head of Aïdan, blessed him, and ordained him king.[1] He inaugurated thus not only a new kingdom, but a new rite, which became at a later date the most august solemnity of Christian national life. The coronation of Aïdan is the first authentic instance known in the West. Columba thus assumed, in respect to the Scotic or Dalriadian kingdom, the same authority with which the abbots of Armagh, successors of St Patrick, were already invested in respect to the kings of Ireland. That this supreme authority and these august functions were conferred upon abbots instead of bishops, has been the cause of much surprise. But at that period of the ecclesiastical history of Celtic nations the episcopate was entirely in the shade; the abbots and monks alone appear to have been great and influential, and the successors of St Columba long retained this singular supremacy over the bishops.

Consecrated by Columba.

The Stone of Fate.

According to Scotch national tradition, the new king Aïdan was consecrated by Columba upon a great stone called the Stone of Fate. This stone was afterwards transferred to Dunstaffnage Castle, the

narrative given by Reeves, was only shown to Columba by the angel, and did not remain in his hands.

[1] "Aidanum, iisdem adventantibus diebus, regem, sicut erat jussus, ordinavit . . . imponensque manum super caput ejus, ordinans benedixit." —Martene (*De Antiquis Ritibus Ecclesiæ*, vol. iii. l. ii. c. 10, in the treatise *De Solemni Regum Benedictione*) says that the consecration of Aïdan is the first known example of that solemnity.

ruins of which may be seen upon the coast of Argyll, not far from Iona; then to the Abbey of Scone, near Perth; and was finally carried away by Edward I., the cruel conqueror of Scotland, to Westminster, where it still serves as a pedestal for the throne of the kings of England on the day of their coronation. The solemn inauguration of the kingdom of Aïdan marks the historical beginning of the Scotch monarchy, which before that period was more or less fabulous. Aïdan was the first prince of the Scots who passed from the rank of territorial chief to that of independent king, and head of a dynasty whose descendants were one day to reign over the three kingdoms of Great Britain.[1]

But to secure the independence of the new Scottish royalty, or rather of the young nation whose stormy and poetic history was thus budding under the breath and blessing of Columba, it was neces-

[1] Aïdan married a British wife, a daughter of those Britons who occupied the banks of the Clyde, and were neighbours of the Scots. With them for his allies, he made war vigorously, though unfortunately, as will be afterwards seen, upon the Anglo-Saxons. He survived Columba, and died in 606, after a reign of thirty-two years. His direct descendants reigned up to 689. They were then replaced by the house of Lorn, another branch of the first Dalriadian colony, whose most illustrious prince, Kenneth Macalpine, reduced the Picts to recognise him as their king in 842. The famous Macbeth and his conqueror Malcolm Canmore, the husband of St Margaret, were both descended from Aïdan, or of the lineage of Fergus. The male line of these Scottish kings of Celtic race ended only with Alexander III. in 1283. The dynasties of Bruce and Stuart were of the female line. According to local and domestic traditions, the great modern clans of Macquarie, Mackinnon, Mackenzie, Mackintosh, Macgregor, Maclean, Macnab, and Macnaughten, are descended from the primitive Dalriadians.

sary to break the link of subjugation or vassalage which bound the Dalriadian colony to the Irish kings. All this time it had remained tributary to the monarchs of the island which it had left nearly a century before to establish itself in Caledonia. To obtain by peaceable means the abolition of this tribute, Columba—who was Irish by heart as well as by birth, yet who at the same time was, like the Dalriadians, his kinsmen, an emigrant in Caledonia, and, like the new king, descended from the monarchs of Ireland—must have seemed the mediator indicated by nature. He accepted the mission, and returned to Ireland, which he had thought never to see again, in company with the king whom he had just crowned, to endeavour to come to an agreement with the Irish monarch and the other princes and chiefs assembled at Drumkeath. His impartiality was above all suspicion; for the very day of the coronation of Aïdan he had announced to him, in the name of God, that the prosperity of the new Scotic kingdom depended upon peace with Ireland, its cradle. In the midst of the ceremony he had said aloud to the king whom he had crowned, "Charge your sons, and let them charge their grandchildren, never to expose their kingdom to be lost by their fault. The moment that they attempt any fraudulent enterprise against my spiritual descendants here, or against my countrymen and kindred in Ireland, the hand of God will weigh heavily upon them, the heart of men

will be raised against them, and the victory of their enemies will be assured."[1]

The king of Ireland, Diarmid, who was, like Columba, of the race of Niall, but of the Nialls of the North, and whom our saint had so violently resisted, had died immediately after the voluntary exile of Columba. He perished, as has been mentioned, by the hand of a prince called Black Aedh, chief of the Antrim Dalriadians, who remained in Ireland when a part of their clan emigrated to Scotland. Some time afterwards the supreme throne of Ireland fell to another Aedh, of the southern branch of the race of Niall, and consequently of the same stock as Columba.[2] He was also the

[1] "Inter ordinationis verba . . . prophetare cœpit dicens: Tu filiis commenda ut et ipsi filiis et nepotibus et posteris suis commendent ne per consilia mala eorum sceptrum regni hujus de manibus suis perdant. . . . In me et in posteros meos . . . aut adversus cognatos meos qui sunt in Hibernia."—ADAMN., iii. 5. Colgan, in remarking this passage in his preface, cannot refrain from returning sadly upon the atrocities committed in Ireland by the Scots and Britons of his time, under the last descendants of the Dalriadian dynasty, James I. and Charles I. "Unde moderni Scoto-Britanni, qui cognatos sancti Columbæ in Hibernia nostris diebus ferro et flamma infestant, e suis sedibus pellunt et in ore crudelis gladii mactant, debent prædictam vindictam ore veridico Dei prophetæ prædictam formidare, si inter posteros Aidani regis velint numerari; si non, certe non minus metuenda sunt illa sacri eloquii oracula, quibus dicitur Qui gladio perimit, gladio peribit."—*Trias Thaum.*, p. 320.

[2] The poet-historian, Thomas Moore, by a singular confusion, looks upon Aedh the Black, the murderer of King Diarmid, and Aedh, son of Aimnire, the king of the Drumkeath parliament, as the same person.—*History of Ireland*, pp. 254, 263, Paris edition. I spare the reader all the other Aedhs or Aïdus, who are to be found mixed up with the history of the age of Columba in the inextricable Irish genealogies. My learned friend, M. Foisset, like a zealous Burgundian as he is, has pointed out to me the resemblance between the name of Aedh, which occurs so often among the Irish princes and kings, and that of the Ædui, the first inhab-

friend and benefactor of his emigrant cousin, to whom he had given before his exile the site of Derry,[1] the most important of his Irish foundations. The first synod or parliament of Aedh's reign had been convoked in a place called Drumceitt,[2] the *Whale's Back*, situated in his special patrimony, not far from the sea and the gulf of Lough Foyle, where Columba had embarked, and at the further end of which was his dear monastery of Derry. It was there that he returned with his royal client, the new king of the Caledonian Scots, whose confessor, or, as the Irish termed it, *friend of his soul*, he had become.[3] The two kings, Aedh and Aïdan, presided at this assembly, which sat for fourteen months, and the recollection of which has been preserved among the Irish people, the most faithful nation in the world, for more than a thousand years.

Aedh, king of Ireland, and Aïdan, king of the Irish in Scotland, at the synod of Drumkeath.

The Irish lords and clergy encamped under tents like soldiers during the entire duration of this parliament.[4] The most important question discussed

itants of Burgundy. He thinks, with reason, that the Celts of Gaul, conquered by Cæsar, had also lived, like their brethren in Ireland and Scotland, in clans, and is persuaded that the Ædui of Bibracte signified originally the clan of the sons of Aedh.

[1] Lynch's *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. ii. c. 9, p. 16.

[2] *Dorsum Cetæ* in Latin, *Drum Ceitt* or *Ceat* in Irish, at present called Drumkeath, near Newtown Limavaddy, in the county of Londonderry.

[3] Irish MS. quoted by Reeves, p. lxxvi, note 4.

[4] "Condictum regum."—Adamnan. "Collectis totius regni optimatibus, universoque clero . . . ad instar militum per papiliones et tentoria turmatim dispersi."—O'Donnell, book iii. c. 2, 5. "Hiberniæ proceribus Drum-Keathian ad leges condendas coeuntibus et quatuordecim mensibus illic hærentibus."—Lynch, c. 9. Colgan, who lived in 1645, narrates that the site of the assembly was then still frequented by numerous

among them was no doubt that of the tribute exacted from the king of the Dalriadians. It does not appear that the Irish king demanded tribute on account of the new kingdom founded by his ancient subjects, but rather on account of that part of Ireland itself, at present the county of Antrim, from whence the Dalriadian colonists had gone, and which was the hereditary patrimony of their new king.[1] This was precisely the position in which the Norman princes, who had become kings of England, while still dukes of Normandy, found themselves, five centuries later, in respect to the kings of France. Columba, the friend of both kings, was commissioned to solve the difficulty. According to some Irish authors, the Abbot of Iona, when the decisive moment arrived, refused to decide, and transferred to another monk, St Colman, the responsibility of pronouncing the judgment. At all events, the Irish king renounced all suzerainty over the king of the Dalriadians of *Albania*, as Scotland was then called. Independence and freedom from all tribute were granted to the Albanian Scots, who, on their side, promised perpetual alliance and hospitality to their Irish countrymen.[2]

The independence of the new kingdom recognised by the intervention of Columba.

Columba had another cause to plead at the par-

pilgrims, and that a procession was formerly celebrated there on the day of All-Saints: "cum summo omnium vicinarum partium accursu."—*Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ*, vol. i. p. 204. The site is still to be seen upon an elevation at Roe Park, near Newtown Limavaddy.—REEVES, p. 37.

[1] MOORE'S *History of Ireland*, vol. i. c. 12, p. 256.

[2] REEVES, pp. lxxvi. and 92.

He interposes in favour of the bards.

liament of Drumceitt, which was almost as dear to his heart as the independence of the Scotic kingdom and colony of which he was the spiritual head. The question in this case was nothing less than that of the existence of a corporation as powerful as, and more ancient and national than, the clergy itself: it concerned the bards, who were at once poets and genealogists, historians and musicians, and whose high position and popular ascendancy form one of the most characteristic features of Irish history. The entire nation, always enamoured of its traditions, its fabulous antiquity, and local and domestic glory, surrounded with ardent and respectful sympathy the men who could clothe in a poetic dress all the lore and superstitions of the past, as well as the passions and interests of the present. In the annals of Ireland, as far back as they can be traced, the bards or *ollambh*, who were regarded as oracles of knowledge, of poetry, history, and music, are always to be found. They were trained from their infancy with the greatest care in special communities, and so greatly honoured that the first place at the royal table, after that of the king himself, was reserved for them.[1] Since the introduction of Christianity, the bards, like the Druids of earlier times, whose successors they are supposed to have been, continued to form a powerful and popular band. They were then divided into three orders: the *Fileas*,

Power and excesses of this corporation.

[1] Eugene O'Curry's *Lectures on the MS. Materials of Irish History*. Dublin, 1861.

who sang of religion and of war; the *Brehons*, whose name is associated with the ancient laws of the country, which they versified and recited;[1] the *Seanachies*, who enshrined in verse the national history and antiquities, and, above all, the genealogies and prerogatives of the ancient families who were specially dear to the national and warlike passions of the Irish people. They carried this guardianship of historical recollections and relics so far as to watch over the boundaries of each province and family domain.[2] They took part, like the clergy, in all the assemblies, and with still greater reason in all the fights. They were overwhelmed with favours and privileges by the kings and petty princes, on whom their songs and their harp could alone bestow a place in history, or even a good name among their contemporaries. But naturally this great power had produced many abuses, and at the moment of which we speak, the popularity of the bards had suffered an eclipse. A violent opposition had been raised against them. Their great number, their insolence, their insatiable greed, had all been made subjects of

[1] The code known under the name of *Laws of the Brehons* continued to regulate the civil life of the Irish even under the English conquest; it was only abolished under James I. at the beginning of the seventeenth century; it had lasted, according to the most moderate calculations, since the time of King Cormac, in 266—that is to say, fourteen centuries.

[2] "Rei antiquariæ professores et poetas . . . quos tempore gentilismi Druidas, Vates, et Bardos . . . vocabant. . . . His ex officio incumbebat . . . familiarum nobilium et prærogativas studiose observare; regionum agrorumque metas ac limites notare ac distinguere."—O'Donnell, book iii. c. 2 and 7.

reproach; and, above all, they were censured for having made traffic and a trade of their poetry—of lavishing praises upon the nobles and princes who were liberal to them, and making others the subject of satirical invectives, which the charm of their verse spread but too readily, to the great injury of the honour of families. The enmities raised against them had come to such a point, that King Aedh felt himself in sufficient force to propose to the assembly of Drumceitt the radical abolition of this dangerous order, and the banishment, and even outlawry, if not, as some say, the massacre, of all the bards.

Whom King Aedh proposes to proscribe.

It is not apparent that the clergy took any part whatever in this persecution of a body which they might well have regarded as their rivals. The introduction of Christianity into the country of Ossian, under St Patrick, seems scarcely, if at all, to have affected the position of the bards. They became Christians without either inflicting or suffering any violence, and they were in general the auxiliaries and friends of the bishops, monks, and saints. Each monastery, like each prince and lord, possessed a bard, whose office it was to sing the glory, and often to write the annals, of the community.[1] Notwithstanding, it is apparent, through many of the legends of the period, that the bards represented a pagan power, in the eyes of many

[1] Hersart de la Villemarqué, *La Poésie des Cloîtres Celtiques*, *Correspondant* du 25 Novembre 1863.

ecclesiastical writers, and that they were willingly identified with those Druids or Magi who had been the principal enemies of the evangelical mission of Patrick in Ireland and of Columba in Scotland.[1] Even in the legend of Columba[2] it is noted that some among them had determined to make him pay for his ransom according to their custom, and had for this end addressed to him importunate solicitations, threatening, if he refused, to abuse him in their verse.

Notwithstanding, it was Columba who saved them. He who was born a poet and remained a poet to the last day of his life, interceded for them, and gained their cause. His success was not without difficulty, for King Aedh was eager in their pursuit; but Columba, as stubborn as bold, made head against all. He represented that care must be taken not to pull up the good corn with the tares; that the general exile of the poets would be the death of a venerable antiquity and of that poetry which was so dear to the country and so useful to those who knew how to employ it.[3] The ripe corn must not be burned, he said, because of the weeds that mingle with it. The king and the

The good grain must not be burned with the weeds.

[1] "Poetæ impudentes," says the legend of St Colman, Boll. Act. SS. Junii, vol. ii. p. 27.

[2] "Cum aliquot vernaculæ seu Hibernicæ poeseos professores, quos bardos vocant, eum nihil tum ad manum habentem, non importune tantum, sed improbe divexassent, nescio quod donativum ab eo sub interminatione invectivi poematis contendentes."—O'Donnell, book i. c. 57.

[3] "Ne inter Antiquariorum vitia extirpanda, simul et interiret venerandæ antiquitatis studium. . . . Artem regno et recte usuris valde proficuam."—O'Donnell.

assembly yielded at length, under condition that the number of bards should be henceforward limited, and that their profession should be put under certain rules determined by Columba himself. It was his eloquence alone which turned aside the blow by which they were threatened; and knowing themselves to be saved by him, they showed their gratitude by exalting his glory in their songs and by leaving to their successors the charge of continuing his praise.[1]

Song of gratitude from the bards in honour of their saviour.

Columba himself had a profound pleasure in this poetical popularity. The corporation of bards had a chief, Dallan Fergall, who was blind, and whose violent death (he was murdered by pirates) has given him a place among the holy martyrs, of whom there are so few in Ireland. Immediately after the favourable decision of the assembly, Dallan composed a song in honour of Columba, and came to sing it before him. At the flattering sounds of this song of gratitude the Abbot of Iona could not defend himself from a human sentiment of self-satisfaction. But he was immediately reproved by one of his monks, Baithen, one of his twelve original companions in exile, and who was destined to be his successor. This faithful friend was not afraid to accuse Columba of pride, nor to tell him

[1] All the authorities of Irish history, printed or in manuscript, confirm this tradition (see REEVES, p. 79, and MOORE, p. 257). Adamnan alone says nothing of it; but he speaks of numerous songs in the Scotic language in honour of Columba, which circulated everywhere in Scotland and in Ireland.

that he saw a sombre cloud of demons flying and playing round his head. Columba profited by the warning. He imposed silence upon Dallan,[1] reminding him that it was only the dead who should be praised, and absolutely forbade him to repeat his song.[2] Dallan obeyed reluctantly, and awaited the death of the saint to make known his poem, which became celebrated in Irish literature under the name of *Amhra*, or the *Praise of St Columbcille*. It was still sung a century after his death throughout all Ireland and Scotland, and even the least devout of men repeated it with tenderness and fervour, as a safeguard against the dangers of war and every other accident.[3] It even

Superstitious devotion with which this song was regarded.

[1] "Composuit patrio sermone rhythmum illum . . . qui in scholis Antiquariorum publice perlegi et scholiis ac commentariis exponi consuevit."—O'Donnell, book i. c. 6. This poem, which has been the subject of innumerable commentaries, still exists in MS., and is to be published with all the *Liber Hymnorum* by Dr Todd. Colgan possessed a copy which seemed to him almost unintelligible: "Est penes me exmplar hujus operis egregie scriptum, sed seclusis fusis, quos habet annexos, commentariis, hodie paucis, iisque peritissimis, penetrabile."—*Ubi supra.*

[2] *Vita Sancti Dallani Martyris*, ap. Colgan, *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ*, p. 204.

[3] "Ejusdem beati viri per quædam Scoticæ linguæ laudum ipsius carmina, et nominis commemorationem, quidam, quamlibet sceleratis laicæ conversationis homines et sanguinarii, ea nocte qua eadem decantaverant cantica, de manibus inimicorum qui eamdem eorumdem cantorum domum circumsteterant, sunt liberati. . . . Pauci ex ipsis, qui easdem sancti viri commemorationes, quasi parvi pendentes, canere noluerant decantationes . . . soli disperierunt. Hujus miraculi testes . . . centeni et amplius. Hoc idem ut contigisse probatur non in uno loco aut tempore, sed diversis locis et temporibus in Scotia et Britannia, simili tamen modo et causa liberationis factum fuisse. Hæc ab expertis uniuscujusque regionis, ubicumque res eadem simili contigit miraculo, indubitanter didicimus."—Adamnan, i. 1. Let us add that the disciples of Columba continued to cultivate music and poetry after his death. A modern poet,

came to be believed that every one who knew this Ambhra by heart and sang it piously would die a good death. But when the unenlightened people came so far as to believe that even great sinners, without either conversion or penitence, had only to sing the Ambhra of Columbcille every day in order to be saved, a wonder happened, says the historian and grand-nephew of the saint, which opened the eyes of the faithful, by showing to them how they ought to understand the privileges accorded by God to his saints. An ecclesiastic of the metropolitan church of Armagh, who was a man of corrupt life, and desired to be saved without making any change in his conduct, succeeded in learning the half of the famous Ambhra, but never could remember the other half. It was in vain that he made a pilgrimage to the tomb of the saint, fasted, prayed, and spent the entire night in efforts to impress it upon his memory—the next morning he found that, though he had at length succeeded in learning the latter half, he had completely forgotten the first.[1]

The gratitude of the bards to him who had preserved them from exile and outlawry, has certainly had some share in the wonderful and lasting popularity of Columba's name. Shrined in the national and religious poetry of the two islands, his

James Hogg, has written some English verses, in themselves insignificant, to an old air which had been sung by the monks of Iona.—WHITELAW, *The Book of Scottish Song*. Glasgow, 1857.

[1] VICOMTE DE LA VILLEMARQUÉ, *Poésie des Cloîtres Celtiques*, after COLGAN and O'DONNELL, *ubi supra*.

fame has not only lasted in full brilliancy in Ireland, but it has survived even the Reformation—which has destroyed almost all other traces of their past history as Christians—in the memory of the Celts of Scotland.

Intimate connection of poetry and music with religion in Ireland.

On the other hand, the protection of Columba certainly confirmed the popularity of the bards in the heart of the Irish nation. All opposition between the religious spirit and the bardic influence disappeared from his time. Music and poetry after that period identified themselves more and more with ecclesiastical life. Among the relics of the saints the harps on which they had played found a place. At the first English conquest, the bishops and abbots excited the surprise of the invaders by their love of music, and by accompanying themselves on the harp.[1] Irish poetry, which was in the days of Patrick and Columba so powerful and so popular, has long undergone in the country of Ossian the same fate as the religion of which these great saints were the apostles. Rooted like it in the heart of a conquered people, and like it proscribed and persecuted with unwearying vehemence, it has come ever forth anew from the bloody furrow in which it was supposed to be buried. The bards became the most powerful allies of patriotism, the most dauntless prophets of national indepen-

[1] "Hinc accidit ut episcopi et abbates et sancti in Hibernia viri citharas circumferre et in iis modulando pie delectari consueverint. . . . Sancti Kevini cithara ab indigenis in reverentia non modica et pro reliquiis virtuosis et magnis usque hodie habetur."—GIRALDUS, *Cambriæ Descriptio*, c. 12.

dence, and also the favourite victims of the cruelty of spoilers and conquerors. They made music and poetry weapons and bulwarks against foreign oppression, and the oppressors used them as they had used the priests and the nobles. A price was set upon their heads. But while the last scions of the royal and noble races, decimated or ruined in Ireland, departed, to die out under a foreign sky amid the miseries of exile, the successor of the bards, the minstrel, whom nothing could tear from his native soil, was pursued, tracked, and taken like a wild beast, or chained and slaughtered like the most dangerous of rebels.

The bards, transformed into minstrels, are the chief champions of national independence and the Catholic faith.

In the annals of the atrocious legislation directed by the English against the Irish people, as well before[1] as after the Reformation, special penalties against the *minstrels, bards, rhymers*, and *genealogists*, who sustained the lords and gentlemen in their love of rebellion and of other crimes,[2] are to be met at every step. An attempt was made, under the sanguinary Elizabeth, to give pecuniary recompense to those who would celebrate "her Majesty's most worthy praise." The bargain was accepted by none. All preferred flight or death to this salary of lies. Wandering over hill and dale, hidden in the depths of the devastated country, they perpetuated there the poetic tradi-

[1] For instance, at the parliament of Kilkenny under Edward I.

[2] These are the words of an act of the time of Elizabeth, quoted by Moore, p. 257.

tions of their condemned race, and sang the glory of ancient heroes and new martyrs, the shame of apostates, and the crimes of the sacrilegious stranger.

In order the better to brave tyranny in the midst of a subdued and silent people, they had recourse to allegory and the elegies of love. Under the figure of an enslaved queen—or of a woman loved with an everlasting love and fought for with despairing faithfulness, in face of the jealous fury of a stepmother—they celebrated again and again the Irish Fatherland, the country in mourning and tears, once queen and now a slave.[1] The Irish, says a great historian of our own day, loved to make of their country a real being whom they loved, and who loved them. They loved to address her without naming her name, and to identify the austere and perilous devotion which they had vowed to her with all that is sweetest and most fortunate in the affections of the heart, like those Spartans who crowned themselves with flowers when about to perish at Thermopylæ.[2]

Proscribed with vehemence.

Up to the time of the ungrateful Stuarts, this proscription of the national poets was permanent, increasing in force with every change of reign and every new parliament. The rage of the Cromwellian Protestants carried them so far as to break, wherever they met with them, the minstrel's harps[3]

[1] "Erin of the sorrows, once a queen, now a slave."

[2] Augustin Thierry, *Dix Ans d'Etudes Historiques.*

[3] "Efferati quidem excursores in obvias quasque lyras earum proscis-

which were still to be found in the miserable cottages of the starving Irish, as they were eleven centuries before, at the time when the courageous and charitable Bridget saw them suspended on the wall of the king's palace.[1] Nevertheless the harp has remained the emblem of Ireland even in the official arms of the British empire; and during all last century the travelling harper, last and pitiful successor of the bards protected by Columba, was always to be found at the side of the priest to celebrate the holy mysteries of the proscribed worship. He never ceased to be received with tender respect under the thatched roof of the poor Irish peasant, whom he consoled in his misery and oppression by the plaintive tenderness and solemn sweetness of the music of his fathers.

They nevertheless lasted up to our own day.

The continuance of these distinctive features of Irish character through so many centuries is so striking, and the misfortunes of that noble race touch us so nearly, that it is difficult to resist the temptation of leaving behind us those distant ages, and of following through later generations the

sione multis in locis immaniter sæviant."—LYNCH, *Cambrensis Eversus*, book i. c. 4, p. 316. This author, who wrote in 1662, feels himself obliged to give a detailed description of the harp, lest the instrument should disappear in the general ruin of Ireland. "Quare operæ me pretium facturum existimo, si lyræ formam lectori ob oculos ponam, ne illius memoris gentis excidio . . . innexa obliteretur." Charles II., as soon as he was established on the throne, permitted the passing of an act of Parliament "against the vagabond minstrels, to repress their rhymes and scandalous songs."

[1] "Et vidit citharas in domo regis, et dixit: Citharizate nobis citharis vestris."—*Tertia Vita Sanctæ Brigitæ*, c. 75, p. 536, ap. COLGAN.

melancholy relics of all that has been discovered or admired in the most ancient days. We may be pardoned for adding that, if the text of those poetic and generously obstinate protests against the enslavement of Ireland have perished, the life and spirit of them has survived in the pure and penetrating beauty of the ancient Irish airs. Their harmonies and their refrains, which are inimitably natural, original, and pathetic, move the depths of the soul, and send a thrill through all the fibres of human sensibility. Thomas Moore, in adapting to them words which are marked with the impression of a passionate fidelity to the proscribed faith and oppressed country, has given to the *Irish Melodies* a popularity which was not the least powerful among those pleas which determined the great contest of Catholic Emancipation.

The Celtic muse at the service of the vanquished in Scotland as in Ireland.

The genius of Celtic poetry has, however, survived not only in Ireland, in the country of Columba and of Moore, but has found a refuge in the glens of the Scottish Highlands, among those vast moors and rugged mountains, and beside the deep and narrow lakes, which Columba, bearing the light of the faith to the Caledonian Picts, had so often traversed. In those districts where, as in a great part of Ireland, the Erse or Gaelic language is still spoken, the Celtic muse, always sad and always attached to the cause of the people, has been found in recent times, at the most prosaic moment of modern civilisation, in the eighteenth

century itself, inspiring the warlike songs and laments which the Highlanders have consecrated to the conquered Pretender and his followers slain. And if we may believe a competent and impartial judge,[1] the last effusions of the soul of the Gaelic race surpass, in plaintive beauty and in passionate feeling, even those delicious Anglo-Scottish songs which no traveller can hear without emotion, and which have assured the palm, at least of poetry, to the cause of the Stuarts, which has been so sadly represented by its princes, and so ill served by events, but which the popular and national muse has thus avenged, even for the irremediable defeat of Culloden.

[1] Charles Mackay, *The Jacobite Songs and Ballads of Scotland from* 1688 *to* 1746, Introduction, p. 18.

CHAPTER V.

COLUMBA'S RELATIONS WITH IRELAND—CONTINUED.

Cordial intercourse of Columba with the Irish princes—Prophecy upon the future of their sons.—Domnall, the king's son, obtains the privilege of dying in his bed.—Columba visits the Irish monasteries.—Popular enthusiasm.—Vocation of the young idiot afterwards known as St Ernan.—Solicitude of Columba for the distant monasteries and monks.—He protects them from excessive labours and accidents.—He exercises authority over laymen.—Baithen, his cousin-german and principal assistant.—The respect shown to both in an assembly of learned men.

Cordial intercourse between Columba and the Irish princes.

In the national parliament of Drumceitt which saved the bards, and where all the ecclesiastical chiefs of the Irish nation, along with their princes and provincial kings, were assembled, Columba, already invested by his apostolical labours with great power and authority, found himself surrounded by public homage, and tokens of universal confidence. To all the kings, whose kinsman and friend he was, he preached peace, concord, the pardon of affronts, and the recall of exiles, many of whom had found shelter in the island monastery which owed its existence to his

own exile.[1] Nevertheless, it was not without trouble that he obtained from the supreme monarch the freedom of a young prince, named Scandlan, son of the chief of Ossory, whom Aedh detained in prison, in contempt of his sworn faith, and of an agreement to which Columba himself had been a witness. The noble abbot went to the prisoner in his dungeon, blessed him, and predicted to him that he should be twice exiled, but that he should survive his oppressor, and reign for thirty years in his paternal domain. The king yielded on this point, but with a bad grace; he feared the influence of the illustrious exile, and had seen him return to Ireland with dissatisfaction. His eldest son had publicly ridiculed the monks of Iona, and had thus drawn upon himself the curse of Columba, which brought misfortune, for he was afterwards dethroned and assassinated. But the king's second son Domnall, who was still young, took openly the part of the Abbot of Iona, who predicted for him not only a long and glorious reign, but the rare privilege of dying in his bed, on the condition of receiving the Holy Communion every eight days, and of keeping at least one in seven of his promises[2]—a somewhat satirical limit, which betrays either the old contradictory spirit of the converted Niall, or the recollection of his own legitimate resentment against certain princes. His prophecy, extremely improbable as it was, in a country where all the

Prophecies of the future.

[1] ADAMNAN, i. 11, 13.

[2] Irish MS. quoted by Reeves, p. 38.

princes perished on the battle-field or by a violent death, was nevertheless fulfilled. Donnall, who was the third successor of his father, following after two other kings who were destroyed by their enemies, had a long and prosperous reign; he gained numerous victories, marching to battle under a banner blessed by St Columba, and died, after an illness of eighteen months, in his bed, or, as Columba specified, with a precision which marks the rareness of the occurrence, on his down-bed.[1] His father, although reconciled to Columba, did not escape the common law. The great abbot bestowed upon him his monastic cowl, promising that it should always be to him as an impenetrable cuirass. After this, he never went into battle without putting on his friend's cowl above his armour. But one day when he had forgotten it, he was killed in a combat with the King of Lagenia or Leinster.[2] Columba had previously warned him against waging war with the people of Leinster, which was the country of his mother, and which he loved with that impassioned clan or family affection which is so distinctive a feature in his character. The Lagenians had not lost the opportunity of working upon this sentiment: for one day, when he was at his Abbey of Durrow, upon their boundary, a numerous assembly of all ages, from children to old men,

[1] "Super plumatiunculam."—ADAMNAN, i. 15. Compare c. 10.

[2] LYNCH, *Cambrensis Eversus*, with Kelly's notes, 17, 19.—O'DONNELL, book i. c. 60.

came to him, and, surrounding him, pleaded with such animation their kindred with his mother, that they obtained from him the promise, or prophecy, that no king should ever be able to overcome them, so long as they fought for a just cause.[1]

He visits his Irish monasteries.

There is no doubt that, after the assembly of Drumceitt, Columba made many journeys to Ireland. The direction of the various monasteries which he had founded there before his voluntary exile, and of which he had kept the government in his own hands, must have led him often back; but after that assembly, his visits were always made notable by miracles of healing, prophecy, or revelation, and still more by the tender solicitude of his paternal heart. Sometimes, towards the decline of his life, while traversing a hilly or marshy country, he travelled in a car, as St Patrick had done; but the care with which his biographers note this fact, proves that formerly the greater part of his journeys had been made on foot.[2] He did not limit himself to communities of which he was the superior or founder; he loved to visit other monastic sanctuaries also, such as that of Clonmacnoise, whose importance has already been pointed out.[3] And on such occasions the crowding and eagerness

[1] "Id prolixe afflicteque allegata cognatione flagitantes."—O'Donnell, *loc. cit.* Compare Reeves, p. 221.

[2] "Per loca aspera et inaquosa. . . . Pergunt sic tota die per loca aspera, cœnosa et saxosa."—O'Donnell, book iii. c. 17. Compare Adamnan, ii. 43.

[3] See *ante*, p. 120.

of the monks to pay their homage to the holy and beloved old man was redoubled; they left their out-door work, and, crossing the earthen intrenchment, which, like the *vallum* of Roman camps, enclosed the Celtic monasteries, came to meet him, chanting hymns. When they came up to him, they prostrated themselves on the ground at his feet, ere they embraced him; and in order to shelter him from the crowd during the solemn processions which were made in his honour, a rampart of branches was carried like a dais by four men, who surrounded him, treading with equal steps.[1] An ancient author even goes so far as to say, that on the occasion of his return and prolonged stay in his native country, he was invested with a sort of general supremacy over all the religious of Ireland, both monks and nuns.[2]

Vocation of the idiot afterwards known as St Ernan.

During the journey from Durrow to Clonmacnoise, Columba made a halt at one of his own monasteries, where a poor little scholar, "of thick speech, and still more heavy aspect," whom his superiors employed in the meanest services, glided into the crowd, and, stealthily approaching the great abbot, touched the end of his robe behind

[1] Undique ab agellulis monasterio vicinis . . . congregati . . . egressi . . . vallum monasterii, unanimes pergunt. . . . Quamdam de lignis pyramidem erga sanctum deambulantem constringentes . . . ne sanctus senior fratrum multitudinis constipatione molestaretur."—ADAMNAN, i. 3.

[2] *Vita S. Farannani Confessoris*, 15th February, c. 3, in COLGAN, *Acta SS. Hiberniæ*, p. 377. This author, who wrote only in the thirteenth century, cannot be considered of great authority.

him, as the Canaanitish woman touched the robe of our Lord. Columba, perceiving it, stopped, turned round, and, taking the child by the neck, kissed him. "Away, away, little fool!" cried all the spectators. "Patience, my brethren," said Columba: then turning to the boy, who trembled with fear, "My son," he said, "open thy mouth, and show me thy tongue." The child obeyed, with increasing timidity. The abbot made the sign of the cross upon his tongue, and added, "This child, who appears to you so contemptible, let no one henceforward despise him. He shall grow every day in wisdom and virtue; he shall be reckoned with the greatest among you; God will give to this tongue, which I have just blessed, the gift of eloquence and true doctrine."[1] The boy grew to manhood, and became celebrated in the churches of Scotland and Ireland, where he was venerated under the name of St Ernan. He himself told this prophecy, so well justified by the event, to a con-

[1] "Valde despectus vultu et habitu . . . cervicem pueri tenet, ipsumque trahens ante faciem suam statuit. Omnibus dicentibus. . . . Dimitte, dimitte, quare hunc infelicem et injuriosum retines puerum. . . . Sinite, fratres, hunc. . . . O fili, aperi os et porrige linguam . . . cum ingenti tremore. . . . In hac vestra congregatione grandis est futurus et lingua ejus salubri et doctrina et eloquentia a Deo donabitur. Hic erat eminens . . . postea per omnes Scotiæ ecclesias famosus et valde notissimus: qui hæc omnia supra scripta verba Segineo abbati de se prophetata enarravit, meo decessore Failbeo intentius audiente . . . cujus revelatione et ego ipse cognovi hæc eadem quæ enarravi."—ADAMNAN, i. 3. St Ernan died in 635. M. de la Villemarqué has cited this incident in his *Légende Celtique*, as a type of the initiation of the children of barbarians into intellectual life by means of the monasteries.

temporary of Adamnan, who has preserved all the details for us.

Tender care of Columba for his distant monks and monasteries.

These journeys, however, were not necessary to prove Columba's solicitude for the monks who filled his monasteries. He showed the same care when distant as when at hand, by the help of that miraculous foresight which came to the assistance of his paternal anxiety in all their spiritual and temporal necessities. One day, after his return from Ireland, he was heard to stop suddenly short in the correspondence or transcription in which he had been engaged in his little cell in Iona, and cry with all his strength, "Help, help!" This cry was addressed to the guardian angel of the community, and the appeal was made on behalf of a man who had fallen from the top of the round tower which was then being built at Durrow, in the centre of Ireland—so great was his confidence in what he himself called the indescribable and lightning speed of the flight of angels: and greater still was his trust in their protection.[1] Another time, at Iona, in a day of chilly fog, such as occurs often in that sombre climate, he was suddenly seen to burst into tears. When asked the reason of his distress, he answered, "Dear son, it is not without reason that I weep. At this very hour I see my

[1] "In tuguriolo suo scribens. . . . Auxiliare, auxiliare. . . . Duo fratres ad januam sancti . . . causam talis subitæ vocis interrogant. . . . Angelo qui nunc inter vos stabat, jussi. . . . Valde mirabilis et pene indicibilis est angelici volatus pernicitas, fulgure ut æstimo, celeritati paritas."—ADAMNAN, iii. 15.

dear monks of Durrow condemned by their abbot to exhaust themselves in this dreary weather building the great round tower of the monastery, and the sight overwhelms me." The same day, and at the same hour, as was afterwards ascertained, Laisran, the abbot of Durrow, felt within himself something like an internal flame, which reawakened in his heart a sentiment of pity for his monks. He immediately commanded them to leave their work, to warm themselves, and take some food, and even forbade them to resume their building until the weather had improved. This same Laisran afterwards came to deserve the name of Consoler of the Monks, so much had he been imbued by Columba with that supernatural charity which, in monastic life, as in every other Christian existence, is at once a light and a flame, *ardens et lucens*.[1]

Authority of Columba over the laymen.

Columba not only retained his superior jurisdiction over the monasteries which he had founded in Ireland, or which had been admitted to the privileges of his foundations, but he also exercised a spiritual authority, which it is difficult to explain, over various laymen of his native island.

[1] "Quanta animi teneritudine . . . et quam mirabili divinitus infusæ scientiæ dono . . . non secus ac si oculis præsentes essent, intuebatur." —O'Donnell, ii. 65. "Quadam brumali et valde frigida die, magno molestatus mœrore, flevit. . . . Non immerito, filiole, ego hac in hora contristor, meos videns monachos quos Laisrannus nunc gravi fatigatos labore in alicujus majoris domus fabrica molestat . . . eodem momento horæ Laisrannus . . . quasi quadam pyra intrinsecus succensus." — Adamnan, i. 29. Compare book iii. c. 15 for a similar incident relating to the same Monastery of Durrow and its round tower. Abbot Laisran was a near relative of Columba, and became his third successor at Iona.

On one occasion, he is known to have sent his cousin, friend, and principal disciple to the centre of Ireland, to Drum-Cuill, to pronounce sentence of excommunication against a certain family, whose crime, however, is not specified. This disciple was Baithen, whom we have seen to be one of Columba's companions from the moment of his exile, and who warned his superior against the fumes of pride, at the time when the bards began to express their enthusiastic gratitude. The gentle Baithen, when he had arrived at the appointed place, after having passed the whole night in prayer under an oak, said to his companions, "No, I will not excommunicate this family before making sure that it will not repent. I give it a year's respite, and during the year, the fate of this tree shall be a warning to it." Some time after the tree was struck by lightning; but we are not informed if the family thus warned was brought to repentance.

Baithen, his principal fellow-worker.

Baithen was a man of tender soul, of whom we would fain speak at greater length, if it were not needful to circumscribe the wide and confused records of Celtic hagiography. Columba compared him to St John the Evangelist; he said that his beloved disciple resembled him who was the beloved disciple of Christ, by his exquisite purity, his penetrating simplicity, and his love of perfection.[1]

[1] "Nolo hac vice hanc familiam excommunicare donec sciam an ad pœnitentiam convertatur, an non. . . . Dicebat quod . . . in innocentia

And Columba was not alone in doing justice to the man who, after having been his chief lieutenant in his work, was to become his first successor. One day, in an assembly of learned monks, probably held in Ireland, Fintan, a very learned and very wise man,[1] and also one of the twelve companions of Columba's exile, was questioned upon the qualities of Baithen. "Know," he answered, "that there is no one on this side of the Alps who is equal to him in knowledge of the Scriptures, and in the greatness of his learning." "What!" said his questioners—"not even his master, Columba?" "I do not compare the disciple with the master," answered Fintan. "Columba is not to be compared with philosophers and learned men, but with patriarchs, prophets, and apostles. The Holy Ghost reigns in him; he has been chosen by God for the good of all. He is a sage among all sages, a king among kings, an anchorite with anchorites, a monk of monks; and in order to bring himself to the level even of laymen, he knows how to be

Testimony to the character of both from an assembly of learned men.

sincerissima et in simplicitate prudentissima, et in disciplina rigoris perfectorum operum non dissimiles fuerunt."—Act. SS. Bolland., vol. ii. June, p. 238. Let us add what these *Actes* relate of his incessant fervour in prayer: "Cum iter aliquod faceret aut alioquin alloqueretur . . . manus suas sub vestimento suo ad orandum Deum menti alacri interim dirigebat. . . . Inter duas particulas ori appositas, simul inter duo sorbitiuncula . . . et quod difficilius est, tempore metendi cum manipulum in terra collectum portaret ad cervicem, alterna brachia ad cœlum extendens, Tonantem interpellabat."—*Ibid.*, p. 237.

[1] So much so, that the Bollandists suppose this Fintan, described as *filius Lappani* in the Acts of St Baithen, to be the same as the Fintan, *filius Aidi*, of Adamnan, book ii. c. 32. Compare Reeves, p. 144.

poor of heart among the poor;[1] thanks to the apostolic charity which inspires him, he can rejoice with the joyful, and weep with the unfortunate. And amid all the gifts which God's generosity has lavished on him, the true humility of Christ is so royally rooted in his soul, that it seems to have been born with him." It is added that all the learned hearers assented unanimously to this enthusiastic eulogium.

[1] "Scitote quod nullus ultra Alpes compar illi in cognitione Scripturarum divinarum et in magnitudine scientiæ reperitur. . . . Numquid ille sapientior est quam sanctus Columba nutricius illius? Ille enim non tam sapientibus litteratis, sed patriarchis et prophetis Dei et apostolis magis comparandus est. . . . Vera humilitas Christi robustissime in eo regnat, tanquam a natura ei hæreret. . . . Cum hoc testimonium vir sanctus in medio sapientum proferret. . . . Ille enim sapiens cum sapientibus, rex cum regibus, anachoreta cum anachoretis, et monachus cum monachis . . . et pauper corde cum pauperibus."—Act. S. Bolland., vol. ii. June, p. 238.

CHAPTER VI.

COLUMBA THE PROTECTOR OF SAILORS AND AGRICULTURISTS, THE FRIEND OF LAYMEN, AND THE AVENGER OF THE OPPRESSED.

His universal solicitude and charity during all his missionary life.—The sailor-monks: seventy monks of Iona form the crew of the monastic fleet; their boats made of osiers covered with hides.—Their boldness at sea: the whirlpool of Corryvreckan.—Columba's prayer protects them against sea-monsters.—Their love of solitude leads them into unknown seas, where they discover St Kilda, Iceland, and the Faröe Isles.—Cormac in Orkney, and in the icy ocean.—Columba often accompanies them: his voyages among the Hebrides.—The wild boar of Skye.—He subdues tempests by his prayer: he invokes his friend St Kenneth.—He is himself invoked during life, and after his death, as the arbiter of winds.—Filial complaints of the monks when their prayers are not granted.—The benefits which he conferred on the agricultural population disentangled from the maze of fables: Columba discovers fountains, regulates irrigations and fisheries, shows how to graft fruit-trees, obtains early harvests, interferes to stop epidemics, cures diseases, and procures tools for the peasants.—His special solicitude for the monkish labourers: he blesses the milk when it is brought from the cow: his breath refreshes them on their return from harvest.—The blacksmith carried to heaven by his alms.—His relations with the layman whose hospitality he claims: prophecy touching the rich miser who shuts his door upon him.—The five cows of his Lochaber host.—The poacher's spear.—He pacifies and consoles all whom he meets.—His prophetic threats against the felons and reivers.—Punishment inflicted upon the assassin of an exile.—Brigands of royal blood put down by Columba at the risk of his life.—He enters into the sea up to his knees to arrest the pirate who had pillaged his friend.—The standard-bearer of Cæsar and the old missionary.

During all the rest of his life, which was to pass in his island of Iona, or in the neighbouring districts of Scotland which had been evangelised by his unwearied zeal, nothing strikes and attracts the historian so much as the generous ardour of Columba's charity. The history of his whole life proves that he was born with a violent and even vindictive temper; but he had succeeded in subduing and transforming himself to such a point that he was ready to sacrifice all things to the love of his neighbour. It is not merely an apostle or a monastic founder whom we have before us—beyond and besides this it is a friend, a brother, a benefactor of men, a brave and untiring defender of the labourer, the feeble, and the poor: it is a man occupied not only with the salvation but also with the happiness, the rights, and the interests of all his fellow-creatures, and in whom the instinct of pity showed itself in a bold and continual interposition against all oppression and wickedness.

Fatherly solicitude and charity the most marked features of his missionary life.

Without losing the imposing and solemn character which always accompanied his popular fame, he will now be revealed to us under a still more touching aspect, through all the long succession of his apostolic labours, and in the two principal occupations — agriculture and navigation — which gave variety to his missionary life.

For navigation alternated with agriculture in the labours of the cenobites of Iona. The same monks who cultivated the scanty fields of the holy

Maritime life of the monks of Iona.

island, and who reaped and threshed the corn, accompanied Columba in his voyages to the neighbouring isles, and followed the sailor's trade, then, it would seem, more general than now among the Irish race.[1] Communication was then frequent, not only between Ireland and Great Britain, but between Ireland and Gaul. We have already seen in the port of Nantes an Irish boat ready to carry away the founder of Luxeuil.[2] The Gaulish merchants came to sell or offer their wines as far as to the centre of the island, to the Abbey of Clonmacnoise.[3] In the life of our saint, seafaring populations[4] are constantly spoken of as surrounding him, and receiving his continual visits; and exercises and excursions are also mentioned, which associate his disciples with all the incidents of a seafaring life. As a proof of this we quote four lines, in very ancient Irish, which may be thus translated:—

> "Honour to the soldiers who live at Iona;
> There are three times fifty under the monastic rule,
> Seventy of whom are appointed to row,
> And cross the sea in their leathern barks."

[1] "Lugbeus quadam ad Sanctum die post frugum veniens triturationem. . . . Idem simul cum sancto viro ad Caput Regionis (*Cantyre*) pergens, nauclerum et nautas adventantis barcæ interrogans." — ADAMNAN, i. 28.

[2] Vol. ii. p. 427. "Navis quæ Scotorum commercia vexerat," says the biography of St Columbanus.

[3] *Vita S. Kiarani*, c. 31, cited by REEVES, p. 57.

[4] "Nautæ, navigatores, remiges, nautici."

Boats of osier covered with hides.

These boats were sometimes hollowed out of the trunks of trees, like those which are still found buried in the *bogs* or turf-mosses of Ireland; but most generally they were made of osier, and covered with buffalo-skins, like those described by Cæsar.[1] Their size was estimated by the number of skins which had been used to cover them. They were generally small, and those made of one or two skins were portable. The abbot of Iona had one of this description for the inland waters when he travelled beyond the northern hills (*dorsum Britanniæ*), which he crossed so often to preach among the Picts.[2] At a later period the community possessed many of a much larger size, to convey the materials for the reconstruction of the primitive monastery at Iona, and the timber which the sons of Columba cut down and fashioned in the vast

[1] "Corpus navium viminibus contextum coriis integebatur."—*Bell. Civil.*, i. 54.

"Primum cana salix, madefacto vimine, parvam
Texitur in puppim cæsoque induta juvenco."

LUCAN., iv.

These boats were called in Celtic *Curach*, from which comes *curruca* or *currica* in monkish Latin. These osier canoes are still in use, under the name of *coracle*, in the Welsh seaports. They are composed of a light construction of willow lathes, covered either with skin or with tarpaulin. After their day's work the fishers put the coracle to dry; and, taking it on their backs, carry it to their cottage door. This has been seen by M. Alphonse Esquiros at Caermarthen.—*Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15th February 1865.

[2] "Mitte te in navim unius pellis. . . . Carabum ex duobus tantum coriis et demidio factum. . . . Nunc, nunc celerius nostram quam ultra rivum naviculam posuistis in domum, huc citius advehite, et in viciniore domuncula ponite."—ADAMNAN, i. 34.

oak forests which then covered the whole country, now so sadly deprived of wood. They went like galleys, with sail or oar, and were furnished with masts and rigging like modern boats. The holy island had at last an entire fleet at its disposal, manned and navigated by the monks.[1]

Their boldness at sea.

In these frail skiffs Columba and his monks ploughed the dangerous and stormy sea which dashes on the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, and penetrated boldly into the numberless gulfs and straits of the sombre Hebridean archipelago. They knew the perils to which their insular existence exposed them; but they braved those dangers without fear, accustomed as they were to live in the midst of storms,[2] upon an isle which the great waves of ocean

[1] This passage of Adamnan is very important for the history of the primitive Celtic navigation. "Cum dolatæ per terram pineæ et roboreæ traherentur longæ trabes *et magnæ navium pariter et domus materiæ eveherentur*. . . . Ea die qua nostri nautæ, omnibus præparatis, supra memoratarum ligna materiarum proponunt scaphis per mare et curucis trahere. . . . Per longas et obligas vias tota die properis flatibus, Deo propitio famulantibus, et plenis sine ulla retardatione velis, ad Ionam insulam omnis illa navalis emigratio prospere evenit."—ii. 45. The words in Italics are the text given by the Bollandists (*Acta Sanctorum*, Junii, vol. ix. p. 275), which seems to us preferable to that of the MS. followed by Dr Reeves. There is here question of three kinds of boats: *naves*, *scaphæ*, and *curucæ;* and it is evident that there must have been a workshop on the island for the building of the larger vessels, because great logs of wood were carried there destined to be employed in the building of boats as well as for the monastic buildings. In another passage (Adamnan, ii. 35), a transport boat, *oneraria navis*, is spoken of, manned by monks, and laden with osiers which the abbot Columba had sent for to a neighbouring property: "Virgarum fasciculos ad hospitium construendum."

[2] "Die fragosæ tempestatis et intolerabilis undarum magnitudinis. . . .

threatened continually to swallow up. Not less alarming was their position when the winds carried them towards the terrible whirlpool, named after a prince of the Niall family, who had been drowned there, the Caldron of Brechan, and which there was always a risk of being driven upon while crossing from Ireland to Scotland. The winds, when blowing from certain directions, hollow out in their whirl such terrible abysses about this spot, that even to our own time it has continued the terror of sailors. The holiest of Columba's guests passed it by with trembling, raising their hands towards heaven to implore the miracle which alone could save them.[1] But he himself, who one day was

The whirlpool of Corryvreckan.

Quis, ait (sanctus), hac die valde ventosa et nimis periculosa, licet breve, fretum prospere transnavigare potest?"—ADAMNAN, i. 4. This recalls the lines of the poet—

> "Quid rigor æternus cœli, quid frigora possunt,
> Ignotumque fretum?"
> CLAUDIAN, *in Consulat. III. Honor.*, v. 54.

[1] "Nunc in undosis Charybdis Brecani æstibus valde periclitatur, ambasque ad cœlum, in prora sedens, palmas elevat."—ADAMNAN, i. 5. "Est vorago periculosissima marina, in qua, si qua navis intrat, non evadit."—*Vita Sancti Kiarani*, apud REEVES, 263. Compare GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS, *Topogr. Hiberniæ*, ii. 41. Walter Scott has not omitted this spot in his poetical itinerary—

> "I would
> That your eye could see the mood
> Of Corryvreckan's whirlpool rude,
> When dons the Hag her whitened hood. . . .
> And Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore
> Still rings to Corryvreckan's roar."

It must be remarked that as the name of Scotia has been transferred from Ireland to Scotland, the name of the abyss so feared by the sailors of Iona has also been transferred to the whirlpool which tourists see in the distance between the isles of Scarba and Iona, in the much-frequented route from Oban to Glasgow.

almost swallowed up in it, and whose mind was continually preoccupied by the recollection of his kindred, imagined that he saw in this whirlpool a symbol of the torments endured in purgatory by the soul of his relative who had perished at that spot, and of the duty of praying for the repose of that soul at the same time as he prayed for the safety of the companions of his voyage.[1]

Columba's prayers protect them against the sea-monsters.

Columba's prayers, his special and ardently desired blessing, and his constant and passionate intercession for his brethren and disciples, were the grand safeguard of the navigators of Iona, not only against wind and shipwrecks, but against other dangers which have now disappeared from these coasts. Great fishes of the cetaceous order swarmed at that time in the Hebridean sea. The sharks ascended even into the Highland rivers, and one of the companions of Columba, swimming across the Ness, was saved only by the prayer of the saint, at the moment when he was but an oar's length from the odious monster, which had before swallowed one of the natives.[2] The entire crew of a boat manned by monks took fright and turned back one day on meeting a whale, or perhaps only a shark more formidable than its neighbours; but on another occasion, the same Baithen who was the friend and

[1] "Illa sunt ossa Brecani cognati nostri, quæ voluit Christus ita nobis ostendi, ut pro defuncti refrigerio, ac pro nostro a præsenti periculo liberatione simul apud Dominum intercedamus."—O'Donnell, ii. 21, apud Colgan, p. 434.

[2] Adamnan, ii. 27.

successor of Columba, encouraged by the holy abbot's blessing, had more courage, continued his course, and saw the monster bury itself in the waves. "After all," said the monk, "we are both in the hands of God, both this monster and I."[1] Other monks, sailing in the high northern sea, were panic-struck by the appearance of hosts of unknown shell-fish, who, attaching themselves to the oars and sides of the boat, made holes in the hide with which the framework was covered.[2]

The love of solitude sends them into unknown seas.

It was neither curiosity nor love of gain, nor even a desire to convert the pagans, which stimulated Columba's disciples to dare all the dangers of navigation in one of the most perilous seas of the world; it was the longing for solitude, the irresistible wish to find a more distant retreat, an asylum

[1] "Ecce cetus miræ et immensæ magnitudinis, se instar montis erigens, ora aperuit patula nimis dentosa. . . . Remiges, deposito velo, valde perterriti . . . illam obortam ex belluino motu fluctuationem vix evadere potuerunt. . . . Cui Baitheneus: Ego et illa bellua sub Dei potestate sumus. . . . Æquor et cetum, ambabus manibus elevatis, benedicit intrepidus. . . . Bellua magna se sub fluctu immergens . . . nusquam apparuit."—ADAMNAN, i. 19. Up to the eighteenth century whales frequented these parts, and they have been seen to capsize fishing-boats. —MARTIN'S *Western Islands*, p. 5. The whales have disappeared, as have also the seals, which as late as 1703 supplied food to the Hebridean islands. The Monastery of Iona kept a flock of them in a neighbouring island: "Parvam insulam ubi marini nostri juris vituli generantur et generant." A robber attempted to take them away, but sheep were given up to him in preference.—ADAMNAN, i. 42.

[2] "Quædam, usque in id temporis invisæ mare obtegentes occurrerant tetræ et infestæ nimis bestiolæ quæ horribili impetu carinam et latera, puppimque et proram ita forti ferebant percussura, ut pelliceum tectum navis penetrale putarentur penetrare posse. Prope ranarum magnitudinem aculeis permolestæ, non volatiles, sed natatiles, sed et remorum palmulas infestabant."—ADAMNAN, ii. 42.

still further off than that of Iona, upon some unknown rock amid the loneliness of the sea, where no one could join them, and from which they never could be brought back. They returned to Iona without having discovered what they were in search of, sad yet not discouraged; and after an interval of rest always took to sea again, to begin once more their anxious search.[1] It was thus that the steep and almost inaccessible island of St Kilda,[2] made famous by the daring of its bird-hunters, was first discovered; then far to the north of the Hebrides and even of the Orcades, they reached the Shetland Isles, and even, according to some, Iceland itself, which is only at the distance of a six days' voyage from Ireland, and where the first Christian church bore the name of St Columba. Another of their discoveries was the Faröe Islands, where the Norwegians at a later date found traces of the sojourn of the Irish monks,

Discovery of St Kilda, the Faröe Isles, and Iceland.

[1] "Desertum in pelago intransmeabili invenire optantes."—ADAMNAN, ii. 42. "Baitheneus . . . benedici a sancto petivit cum ceteris, in mari eremum quæsiturus, post longos per ventosa circuitus æquora, eremo non reperto, in patriam reversus."—*Ibid.*, i. 20.

[2] Several religious buildings of a very early date, and a church dedicated to St Columba, were to be found in St Kilda as late as 1758. The inhabitants of the island, though Calvinists, still celebrated the saint's day by carrying all the milk of their dairies to the governor or farmer of the isle, which belonged then to a chief of the clan Macleod. This farmer distributed it in equal portions to every man, woman, and child in the island.—See *History of St Kilda*, by Kenneth Macaulay. This islet, which is the most western spot in Europe, is celebrated for the exploits of the bird-catchers, who are suspended by long cords over perpendicular cliffs. It has scarcely eighty inhabitants. The site of the chapel called that of Columba is still shown, with a cemetery and some medicinal and consecrated springs. St Columba's day is still observed by the people.

Celtic books, crosses, and bells.[1] Cormac, the boldest of these bold explorers, made three long, laborious and dangerous voyages with the hope, always disappointed, of finding the wilderness of which he dreamed. The first time on landing at Orkney he escaped death, with which the savage inhabitants of that archipelago threatened all strangers, only by means of the *recommendations* which Columba had procured from the Pictish king, himself converted, to the still pagan king of the northern islanders.[2] On another occasion the south wind drove him for fourteen successive days and nights almost into the depths of the icy ocean, far beyond anything that the imagination of man had dreamed of in those days.[3]

Cormac at the Orkneys.

[1] Landnamabok, ap. *Antiq. Celto-Scand.*, p. 14. Dicuil, who wrote in 795, states that a hundred years before the Faröe Islands had been inhabited by "*eremitæ ex nostra Scotia navigantes.*"—Ed. Letronne, p. 39. Compare INNES, *Scotland in the Middle Ages*, p. 101, and LANIGAN, *Eccles. History of Ireland*, c. 3, p. 225, where the question of the first discovery of Iceland is thoroughly investigated.

[2] "Brudeo regi, præsenti Orcadum regulo, commendavit dicens: Aliqui ex nostris nuper emigraverunt, desertum in pelago intransmeabili invenire optantes, qui si forte post longos circuitus Orcades devenerunt insulas, huic regulo cujus obsides in manu tua sunt, diligenter commenda . . . et propter supradictam S. viri commendationēnem, de morte in Orcadibus liberatus est vicina."—ADAMNAN, ii. 42. This passage will recall that of Ariosto, where he places in the Hebrides the scene of Olympia's deliverance by Roland, and attributes to the inhabitants of these islands the habit of exposing their women to sea monsters:—

> "Per distrugger quell' isola d'Ebuda
> Che di quante il mar cinge è la più cruda.
> Voi dovete saper ch'oltre l'Irlanda,
> Fra molte, che vi son, l'isola giace
> Nomata Ebuda, che per legge manda
> Rubando intorno il suo popol rapace."
>
> *Orlando Furioso*, ix. 11-12.

[3] "Cormacus, qui tribus non minus vicibus eremum in Oceano laboriose

Columba, the father and head of those bold and pious mariners, followed and guided them by his ever vigilant and prevailing prayers. He was in some respects present with them, notwithstanding the distance which separated them from the sanctuary and from the island harbours which they had left. Prayer gave him an intuitive knowledge of the dangers they ran. He saw them, he suffered and trembled for them; and immediately assembling the brethren who remained in the monastery by the sound of the bell, offered for them the prayers of the community. He implored the Lord with tears to grant the change of wind which was necessary for those at sea, and did not rise from his knees until he had a certainty that his prayers were granted. This happened often, and the saved monks, on returning from their dangerous voyages, hastened to him to thank and bless him for his prophetic and beneficent aid.[1]

Often he himself accompanied them in their voy-

quæsivit, nec tamen invenit."—ADAMNAN, i. 6. "Postquam a terris per infinitum Oceanum plenis enavigavit velis . . . usque ad mortem periclitari cœpit. Nam cum ejus navis a terris per quatuordecim æstivi temporis dies, totidemque noctes, plenis velis, austro flante vento, ad septentrionalis plagam cœli directo excurreret cursu, ejusmodi navigatio ultra humani excursus modum et irremeabilis videbatur."—*Ibid.*, ii. 42.

[1] "Eadem hora et sanctus noster, quamlibet longe absens corpore, spiritu tamen præsens in navi cum Cormaco erat. Unde . . . personante signo fratres ad orationem convocant. . . . Ecce enim nunc Cormacus cum suis nautis. . . . Christum intentius precatur: et nos ipsum orando adjuvemus. . . . Et post orationem cito surgit, et abstergens lacrymas . . . quia Dominus austrum nunc in aquilonarem convertit flatum, nostros de periculis commembres retrahentem, quos hic ad nos iterum reducat."—ADAMNAN, ii. 42.

ages of circumnavigation or exploration, and paid many visits to the isles of the Hebridean archipelago discovered or frequented by the sailors of his community, and where *cells* or little colonies from the great island monastery seem to have existed. This was specially the case at Eigg, where a colony of fifty-two monks, founded and ruled by a disciple of the abbot of Iona, were killed by pirates twenty years after his death.[1] This was a favourite spot which he loved to visit, no doubt to enjoy the solitude which was no longer to be found at Iona, where the crowds of penitents, pilgrims, and petitioners increased from day to day. And he took special pleasure also in Skye, the largest of the Hebridean isles, which, after the lapse of twelve centuries, was recalled to the attention of the world by the dangerous and romantic adventures

His voyages and visits to the other Hebridean isles.

[1] The tragedy of Eigg, which took place in 617, deserves special mention. According to Irish annals, St Donnan, the founder of the community, was the friend and disciple of Columba. Desirous of finding a more solitary retreat, he established himself with some companions in the island of Eigg, which was then inhabited only by the sheep of the queen of the country (many of the islets near Staffa are at present used as pasture). The queen, informed of this invasion of her territory, commanded that all should be killed. When the murderers arrived on the island it was the eve of Easter, and mass was being said. Donnan begged them to wait until mass was over. They consented, and when the service was at an end the monks gave themselves up to the sword. According to another version the queen or lady of the soil sent pirates (latrones) to kill them. They were surprised singing psalms in their oratory, from whence they went into the refectory, in order that they might die where the most carnal moments of their life had been passed. There were fifty-two of them. This is the version given by the Bollandists, vol. ii. April, p. 487. As if by the special blessing of these martyrs, this isle was still Catholic in 1703, and St Donnan was venerated.—MARTIN'S *Journey to the Western Islands*, p. 279.

of Prince Charles-Edward and Flora Macdonald. It was then scarcely inhabited, though very large and covered by forests, in which he could bury himself and pray, leaving even his brethren far behind him. One day he met an immense wild boar pursued by dogs; with a single word he killed the ferocious brute, instead of protecting it, as in similar cases the saints of the Merovingian legends were so ready to do.[1] He continued during all the middle ages the patron of Skye, where a little lake still bears his name, as well as several spots, and monuments in the neighbouring isles.[2]

The wild boar of Skye.

Storms often disturbed these excursions by sea, and then Columba showed himself as laborious and bold as the most tried of his monastic mariners. When all were engaged in rowing, he would not remain idle, but rowed with them.[3] We have seen him brave the frequent storms of the narrow and

While sailing with his monks he stills the storms by prayer.

[1] "Cum in Scia insula aliquantis demoraretur diebus, paulo longius solus, orationis intuitu, separatus a fratribus, silvam ingressus. . . . Venatici canes. . . . Ulterius huc procedere noles: in loco ad quem devenisti morere."—ADAMNAN, ii. 26.

[2] This lake has been drained by Lord Macdonald, the present proprietor of the island. The memory and name of Columba are distinctly to be found at *Eilea Naombh*, where a well which he had hollowed in the rock, and the tomb of his mother *Eithne*, are still shown; and also at Tiree, so often mentioned by Adamnan under the name of *Terra Ethice*. In all the bleak islands of the western coast of Scotland, and especially of the district of Lorn (Argyllshire), there are sculptured crosses of curious and varied forms, tombstones, ruined chapels, buildings of coarse construction and singular shape, Druidical stones, and churches more or less ancient, almost always dedicated to Columba. These are carefully described in a small volume with engravings, which has been published anonymously by Thomas Muir, a Leith merchant, entitled *The Western Islands;* Edinburgh, 1861.

[3] *Vita S. Comgelli*, ap. COLGAN, p. 458.

dangerous lakes in the north of Scotland.[1] At sea he retained the same courageous composure in the most tempestuous weather, and took part in all the sailors' toils. During the voyage which he made from Iona to Ireland, to attend with King Aïdan the parliament of Drumceitt, his vessel was in great danger; the waves dashed into the boat till it was full of water, and Columba took his part with the sailors in baling it out. But his companions stopped him. "What you are doing at present is of little service to us," they said to him; "you would do better to pray for those who are about to perish." He did so, and the sea grew calm from the moment when, mounting on the prow, he raised his arms in prayer.

With these examples before them, his companions naturally appealed to his intercession whenever storms arose during any of his voyages. On one occasion he answered them, "It is not my turn; it is the holy abbot Kenneth who must pray for us." Kenneth was the abbot of a monastery in Ireland, and a friend of Columba's who came often to Iona to visit him. At the very same hour he heard the voice of his friend echo in his heart, and, warned by an internal voice, left the refectory where he was, and hastened to the church to pray for the shipwrecked, crying, "We have something else to do than to dine when Columba is in danger of perishing at sea." He did

[1] See *ante*, page 178.

not even take the time to put on both his shoes before he went to the church, for which he received the special thanks of his friend at Iona;[1] an incident which recalls another Celtic legend—that of the bishop St Paternus, who obeyed the call of his metropolitan with a boot upon one foot only.[2]

He is invoked everywhere as the master of the winds.

Under all these legendary digressions it is evident that the monastic apostle of Caledonia, apart from the prevailing efficacy of his prayers, had made an attentive study of the winds and of all the phenomena of nature which affected the lives of the insular and maritime people whom he sought to lead into Christianity. A hundred different narratives represent him to us as the Eolus of those fabulous times and dangerous seas. He was continually entreated to grant a favourable wind for such or such an expedition; it even happened one day that two of his monks, on the eve of setting

[1] "In mari periclitari cœpit; totum namque vas navis, valde concussum, magnis undarum cumulis fortiter ferebatur. Nautæ tum forte sancto sentinam cum illis exhaurire conanti aiunt: Quod nunc agis non magnopere nobis proficit periclitantibus, exorare potius debes pro pereuntibus. Et intentans precem . . . aquam cessat amaram exinanire . . . dulcem fundere cœpit. Sæva nimis insistente et periculosa tempestate: Hac in die non est meum pro vobis in periculo orare, sed est abbatis Cainnachi sancti viri. . . . Spiritu revelante sancto, supradictam sancti Columbæ interiore cordis aure vocem audiens. . . . Non est tempus prandere quando in mari periclitatur navis sancti Columbæ. . . . Nunc valde nobis proficit tuus ad ecclesiam velox cum uno calceamento cursus."—Adamnan, ii. 12, 13.

[2] Vol. ii. p. 273. Cainnach or Kenneth, a saint very popular in Scotland, whose name has been borne by several Scottish kings, was abbot of Aghaboe, in the diocese of Ossory. Born about 517, he died in 600, and left his name to the neighbouring islet of Inch-Kenneth, near Iona, which was visited by Johnson.

out in two different directions, came to him to ask, the one a north wind, and the other a south wind. He granted the prayer of both, but by delaying the departure of the one who was going to Ireland until after the arrival of the other, who went only to the neighbouring isle of Tiree.[1]

Thus it happened that from far and near Columba was invoked or feared by the sailors as the master of all the winds that blew. Libran of the Rushes, the generous penitent whose curious history has been already recorded, wishing to return from Ireland to Iona, was turned back by the crew of the boat which was leaving the port of Derry for Scotland, because he was not a member of the community of Iona. Upon which the disappointed traveller mentally invoked across the sea the help of his absent friend. The wind immediately changed, and the boat was driven back to land. The sailors saw poor Libran still lingering upon the shore, and called to him from the deck, "Perhaps it is because of thee that the wind has changed; if we take thee with us, art thou disposed to make it once more favourable?" "Yes," said the monk; "the holy abbot Columba, who imposed upon me seven years of penitence, whom I have obeyed, and to whom I wish to return, will obtain that grace for you." And the result was

1 "Simul unanimes postulant ut ipse a Domino postulans impetraret prosperum crastina die ventum sibi dari diversa emigraturis via."—ADAMNAN, ii. 15.

that he was taken on board, and the journey was happily accomplished.[1]

These events took place in his lifetime; but during at least a century after his death he remained the patron, always popular and propitious, of sailors in danger. A tone of familiar confidence, and sometimes of filial objurgation, may be remarked in their prayers, such as may be found among the Celts of Armorica and the Catholic nations of the south of Europe. Adamnan confesses that he himself and some other monks of Iona, embarked in a flotilla of a dozen boats charged with oaken beams for the reconstruction of the monastery, were so detained by contrary winds in a neighbouring island, that they took to accusing their Columba. "Dear saint," they said to him, "what dost thou think of this delay? We thought up to this moment that thou hadst great favour with God." Another time, when they were detained by the same cause in a bay near the district of Lorn, precisely on the vigil of St Columba's day, they said to him, "How canst thou leave us to pass thy feast to-morrow among laymen, and not in thine own church? It would be so easy for thee to obtain from the Lord that this contrary wind should

[1] "Clamitans de litore rogitat ut ipsum nautæ cum eis susciperent navigaturum ad Britanniam. Sed ipsi refutaverunt eum, quia non erat de monachis sancti Columbæ. . . . Videntes virum . . . secus flumen cursitantem . . . ad ipsum de navi clamitantes. . . . Qui statim, rate ascensa: In nomine Omnipotentis, ait, cui sanctus Columba inculpabiliter servit, tensis rudentibus, levate velum."—ADAMNAN, ii. 39.

become favourable, and permit us to sing mass in thy church!" On these two occasions their desires were granted; the wind changed suddenly, and permitted them to get to sea and make their way to Iona in those frail boats whose spars, crossing upon the mast, formed the august symbol of redemption. More than a hundred witnesses of these facts were still living when the biographer of our saint wrote his history.[1]

This tender and vigilant charity, which lent itself to all the incidents of a sailor's and traveller's life, becomes still more strongly apparent during all the phases of his existence, in his relations with the agricultural population, whether of Ireland, which was his cradle, or of his adopted country Caledonia. Amid the fabulous legends and apocryphal and childish miracles with which Irish historians have filled out the glorious story of the great missionary,[2] it is pleasant to be able to discover the

[1] "Quodam modo quasi accusare nostrum Columbam cœpimus. . . . Placetne tibi, sancte, hæc nobis adversa retardatio? huc usque a te, Deo propitio, aliquod nostrorum laborum speravimus consolationum adjumentum, te æstimantes alicujus esse grandis apud Deum honoris. . . . Placetne tibi, sancte, crastinam tuæ festivitatis inter plebeios et non in tua ecclesia transigere diem? . . . tui natalis missarum solemnia celebremus. . . . Proinde orantes nautæ vela subrigunt . . . tum nautæ antennas, crucis instar, et vela protensis sublevans rudentibus, prosperis et lenibus ventis eadem die appetentes insulam."—ADAMNAN, ii. 45.

[2] The pious Franciscan Colgan, who has included in his collection of *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ* (unhappily incomplete) so many fables, has, notwithstanding, omitted a crowd of incredible narratives which his predecessors had adopted. "Nonnulla . . . tanquam ex monumentis vel apocryphis, vel ex rerum forte vere gestorum nimia exaggeratione speciem fabulæ præferentibus, consulte omittenda duximus. . . . Quia nobis apparent vel exegetum vel librariorum (qui miris mirabiliora immiscuerunt)

Benefits conferred upon agriculturists.

unmistakable evidence of his intelligent and fruitful solicitude for the necessities, the labours, and the sufferings of the inhabitants of the rural districts, and his active intervention on their behalf. When the legend tells us how, with one stroke of his crosier, he made fountains of sweet waters spring in a hundred different corners of Ireland or Scotland, in arid and rocky districts, such as that of the peninsula of Ardnamurchan ;[1] when it shows him lowering, by his prayers, the cataracts of a river so that the salmon could ascend in the fishing season, as they have always done since, to the great benefit of the dwellers by the stream,[2] we recognise in

licentiis et commentis ita essa depravata ut solum fabularum speciem præferant."—*Trias Thaumaturga*, p. 441. The Bollandists protested with still greater energy, and repeatedly, against the fables which they, nevertheless, thought themselves obliged to reproduce. "Vitæ hujus auctor aliquid habere videtur de genio Hibernico, cui solet esse perquam familiare, ambulare in mirabilibus, in rebus, inquam, supra fidem prodigiosis, ne dicam portentosis."—Vol. iii. August, p. 658. Compare the same volume, p. 742, and vol. ii. July, p. 241 and 299.

[1] "Tergemino pedi in terram ictu, tergeminos fontes erumpere fecit."—O'Donnell, book i. c. 86 ; Adamnan, i. 12, ii. 10.

[2] "Columba ratus eam fluminis sterilitatem a prædicta cataracta derivari, et in commune vergere accolarum dominorumque ejus ditionis damnum, fluvium benedixit, rupique in Christi nomine jussit tantum subsidere quantum opus esset ut pisces ultro citroque libere commearent. Paruit confestim sancti viri imperio præfracta rupes et . . . facta est demissior, ut exinde et confluentium illuc piscium, præsertim vero salmonum (quorum et frequentissima et copiosissima ab eo tempore per universum fluvium fit captura) ascensui non obsistat, et nihilominus subjecto vertici adeo promineat, ut videatur a naturalibus contra impetuose ruentis fluvii ictum, magis sancti viri merito, quam innata agilitate conscendi."—O'Donnell, *Vita Quinta*, book ii. c. 92. The river here spoken of is the Erne, a river of Ulster, which throws itself into the sea after having crossed the two great lakes called Lough Erne. In recollection of this benefit the historian tells us that all the produce of the fisheries on St Columba's day was left for the *coarb*—that is to say, for the abbot,

the tale the most touching expression of popular and national gratitude for the services which the great monk rendered to the country, by teaching the peasants to search for the fountains, to regulate the irrigations, and to rectify the course of the rivers, as so many other holy monks have done in all European lands.

It is equally apparent that he had with zeal and success established the system of grafting and the culture of fruit-trees, when we read the legend which represents him to us, at the beginning of his monastic career in Durrow, the most ancient of his foundations, approaching, in autumn, a tree covered with sour and unwholesome fruit, to bless it, and saying, "In the name of Almighty God, let thy bitterness leave thee, O bitter tree, and let thy apples be henceforward as sweet as up to this time they have been sour!"[1] At other times he is said to have obtained for his friends quick and abundant harvests, enabling them, for example, to cut barley in August which they had sown in

who held the first rank among the successors of the saint in the monasteries he had founded.

[1] "Quædam arbor valde pomosa . . . de qua cum incolæ loci quodda haberent pro nimia fructus amaritudine querimonium. . . . Vident lignum incassum abundos habere fructus qui ex eis gustantes plus læderent quam delectarent. . . . In nomine omnipotentis Dei, omnis tua amaritudo, o arbor amara, a te recedat; tua huc usque amarissima nunc in dulcissima vertantur poma. . . . Dicto citius eodemque momento, omnia poma . . . in miram versa sunt dulcedinem."—ADAMNAN, ii. 2. "Arborem plenam fructu qui erat hominibus inutilis præ nimia amaritudine," it is said in a similar legend told of another Irish saint, Mochoënoroc.—Ap. COLGAN, *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniæ*, p. 592.

June—a thing which then seemed a miracle, but is not without parallel in Scotland at the present time.[1] Thus almost invariably the recollection of a service rendered, or of a benefit asked or spontaneously conferred, weds itself in the legend to the story of miracles and outbursts of wonder-working prayer—which, in most cases, were for the benefit of the cultivators of the soil: it is evident that he studied their necessities and followed their vicissitudes with untiring sympathy.

His zeal against epidemics.

In the same spirit he studied and sought remedies for the infectious diseases which threatened life, or which made ravages among the cattle of the country. Seated one day upon a hillock in his island, he said to the monk who was with him, and who belonged to the Dalriadian colony, "Look at that thick and rainy cloud which comes from the north; it has within it the germs of a deadly sickness; it is about to fall upon a large district of our Ireland, bringing ulcers and sores upon the body of man and beast. We must have pity on our brethren. Quick, let us go down, and to-morrow thou shalt embark and go to their aid." The monk obeyed, and, furnished with bread which Columba had blessed, he went over all the district smitten by the pestilence, distributing to the first sick persons he met, water, in which the bread blessed by the exiled abbot, who concerned himself so anxiously about the lot of his countrymen, had

[1] *New Statistical Account*, cited by Reeves, p. 459.

been steeped. The remedy worked so well, that from all parts both men and beasts crowded round the messenger of Iona, and the praises of Christ and his servant Columba resounded far and wide.[1]

Thus we see the saint continually on the watch for those evils, losses, and accidents which struck the families or nations specially interesting to him, and which were revealed to him either by a supernatural intuition or by some plaintive appeal. Sometimes we find him sending the blessed bread, which was his favourite remedy, to a holy girl who had broken her leg in returning from mass; sometimes curing others of ophthalmia by means of salt also blessed; everywhere on his evangelical journeys, or other expeditions, we are witnesses of his desire, and the pains he took, to heal all the sick that were brought to him, or who awaited him on the roadside, eager, like the little idiot of Clonmacnoise, to touch the border of his robe—an accompaniment which had followed him during the whole course of his journey to the national assembly of Drumceitt.[2]

[1] "Hæc nubes valde nocua hominibus et pecoribus erit . . . velocius transvolans super Scotiæ portum . . . purulenta humanis in corporibus et in pecorum uberibus nasci faciet ulcera. . . . Sed nos eorum miserati subvenire languoribus, Domino miserante, debemus. Tu ergo, nunc mecum descendens, navigationem præpara crastina die. . . . Cujus rumor per totam illam morbo pestilentiore vastatam regionem cito divulgatus, omnem morbidum ad sancti Columbæ legatum invitavit populum . . . homines cum pecudibus salvati Christum in sancto Columba laudarunt."—ADAMNAN, ii. 7.

[2] "Maugina, sancta virgo . . . ab oratorio post missam domum reversa titubavit. . . . Sorori et suæ nutrici profecturam quæ ophthalmiæ laborabat valde gravi labore. . . . Diversorum languores infirmorum invocato Christi nomine, sanavit . . . ad regum pergens condictum in Dorsi Cete.

His entire life bears the mark of his ardent sympathy for the labourers in the fields. From the time of his early travels as a young man in Ireland, when he furnished the ploughmen with ploughshares, and had the young men trained to the trade of blacksmith,[1] up to the days of his old age, when he could only follow far off the labour of his monks, his paternal tenderness never ceased to exercise on their account its salutary and beneficent influence. Seated in the little wooden hut which answered the purpose of a cell, he interrupted his studies, and put down his pen, to bless the monks as they came back from the fields, the pastures, or the barns. The younger brethren, after having milked the cows of the community, knelt down, with their pails full of new milk, to receive from a distance the abbot's blessing, sometimes accompanied by an exhortation useful to their souls.[2] During one of the last summers of his life, the monks, returning in the evening from reaping the scanty harvest of their island, stopped short as they approached the monastery, suddenly touched with strange emotion.

The reapers of Iona perfumed and refreshed by his spirit.

Aut sanctæ manus protensione . . . aut etiam fimbriæ ejus tactu amphibali."—ADAMNAN, ii. 5, 6, 7, 35.

[1] "Conquerentibus agricolis deesse ad orandum ferramenta, amissum aratri vomerem (restituit); juvenem quemdam . . . nunquam alias fabrilibus assuetum solo verbo protinus ferramentorum fabrum effecit; qui mox ad sancti imperium pro colonis vomerem, cultrumque faberrime cudit."—O'DONNELL, *Quinta Vita*, i. 68.

[2] "Sedens in tuguriolo tabulis suffulto. . . . Juvenis ad januam tugurioli in quo vir beatus scribebat, post vaccarum reversus mulsionem, in dorso portans vasculum novo plenum lacte, dicit ad sanctum ut juxta morem tale benediceret onus."—ADAMNAN, i. 25, ii. 16, iii. 22.

The steward of the monastery, Baithen, the friend and future successor of Columba, asked them, "Are you not sensible of something very unusual here?" "Yes," said the oldest of the monks, "every day, at this hour and place, I breathe a delicious odour, as if all the flowers in the world were collected here. I feel also something like the flame of the hearth which does not burn but warms me gently; I experience, in short, in my heart a joy so unusual, so incomparable, that I am no longer sensible of either trouble or fatigue. The sheaves which I carry on my back, though heavy, weigh upon me no longer; and I know not how, from this spot to the monastery, they seem to be lifted from my shoulders. What, then, is this wonder?" All the others gave the same account of their sensations. "I will tell you what it is," said the steward; "it is our old master, Columba, always full of anxiety for us, who is disturbed to find us so late, who vexes himself with the thought of our fatigue, and who, not being able to come to meet us with his body, sends us his spirit to refresh, rejoice, and console us."[1]

[1] "Post messionis opera vespere ad monasterium redeuntes. . . . Quamdam miri odoris fragrantiam ac si universorum florum in unum sentio collectorum; quanquam quoque quasi ignis ardorem, non pœnalem, sed quodam modo suavem; sed et quamdam in corde insuetam et incomparabilem infusam lætificationem, quæ me subito consolatur et lætificat ita ut nullius mœroris, nullius laboris meminisse possim. Sed et onus quod meo, quanquam grave, porto in dorso, ab hoc loco usque ad monasterium, in tantum relevatur, ut me oneratum non sentiam. . . . Sic omnes operarii sed singillatim profitentur. . . . Scitis quod senior noster Columba de nos anxie cogitet et nos ad se tardius pervenientes ægre ferat nostri memor laboris, et idcirco quia corporaliter obviam nobis non venit,

The blacksmith carried to heaven by his alms.

It must not be supposed, however, that he reserved his solicitude for his monastic labourers alone. Far from that, he knew how to appreciate the work of laymen when sanctified by Christian virtue. "See," he said one day to the elders of the monastery, "at this moment while I speak, such a one who was a blacksmith yonder in Ireland—see him, how he goes up to heaven! He dies an old man, and he has worked all his life; but he has not worked in vain. He has bought eternal life with the work of his hands; for he dispensed all his gains in alms; and I see the angels who are going for his soul."[1] It will be admitted that the praise of manual labour, carried to a silly length in our days, has been rarely expressed in a manner so solemn and touching.

His relations with the laymen whose hospitality he received.

It is also recorded that he took pleasure in the society of laymen during his journeys, and lived among them with a free and delightful familiarity. This is one of the most attractive and instructive phases of his history. He continually asked and received the hospitality not only of the rich, but also of the poor; and sometimes, indeed, received a more cordial reception from the poor than from the rich. To those who refused him a shelter he predicted prompt punishment. "That miser,"

spiritus ejus nostris obviat gressibus, qui taliter nos consolans lætificat."—ADAMNAN, i. 37.

[1] "Faber ferrarius non incessum laboravit, qui de propria manuum laboratione suarum præmia felix comparuit æterna. Ecce nunc anima ejus vehitur a sanctis angelis ad cœlestis patriæ gaudia."—ADAMNAN, iii. 9.

he said, "who despises Christ in the person of a traveller, shall see his wealth diminish from day to day and come to nothing; he will come to beggary, and his son shall go from door to door holding out his hand, which shall never be more than half filled."[1] When the poor received him under their roof, he inquired with his ordinary thoughtfulness into their resources, their necessities, all their little possessions. At that period a man seems to have been considered very poor in Scotland who had only five cows. This was all the fortune of a Lochaber peasant in whose house Columba, who continually traversed this district when going to visit the king of the Picts, passed a night, and found a very cordial welcome notwithstanding the poverty of the house. Next morning he had the five little cows brought into his presence and blessed them, predicting to his host that he should soon have five hundred, and that the blessing of the grateful missionary should go down to his children and grandchildren — a prophecy which was faithfully fulfilled.[2]

The five cows of his host at Lochaber.

[1] "De quodam viro divite tenacissimo . . . qui sanctum Columbam despexerat nec cum hospitio receperat . . . et illius avari divitiæ, qui Christum in peregrinis hospitibus sprevit. . . . Ipse mendicabit, et filius cum semivacua de domo in domum perula discurret."—ADAMNAN, ii. 20.

[2] "Hic Nesanus cum esset valde inops . . . hospitaliter et secundum vires unius noctis spatio ministrasset . . . ab eo inquirit cujus boculas numeri haberet . . . quinque. . . . Ab hac die tuæ paucæ vaculæ crescent usque ad centum et quinque vaccarum numerum. Nesanus homo plebeius erat cum uxore et filiis. . . . Vir sanctus, quadam nocte quum apud supramemoratum . . . inopem bene hospitaretur, mane primo de quantitate et qualitate substantiæ plebeium hospitem interrogat.' —

Gift of a blessed spear to the poacher.

In the same district of Lochaber, which is still the scene of those great deer-stalking expeditions in which the British aristocracy delight, our saint was one day accosted by an unfortunate poacher, who had not the means of maintaining his wife and children, and who asked alms from him. "Poor man," said Columba, "go and cut me a rod in the forest." When the rod was brought to him, the abbot of Iona himself sharpened it into the form of a spear. When he had done this he blessed the improvised javelin, and gave it to his suppliant, telling him that if he kept it carefully, and used it only against wild beasts, venison should never be wanting in his poor house. This prophecy also was fulfilled. The poacher planted his blessed spear in a distant corner of the forest, and no day passed that he did not find there a hart or doe, or other game, so that he soon had enough to sell to his neighbours as well as to provide for all the necessities of his own house.[1]

Columba thus interested himself in all that he

Adamnan, ii. 21. · The district of Lochaber, celebrated in the modern wars of Scotland, is situated upon the borders of the counties of Argyle and Inverness, on the way from Iona to the residence of the Pictish king, and was consequently often crossed by Columba.

[1] "Plebeius pauperrimus, mendicus . . . quo unde maritam et parvulos cibaret non habebat quadam nocte. . . . Miselle homuncio, tolle de silva contulum vicina et ad me cujus defer. . . . Quem sanctus excipiens in veru exacuit propria manu, benedicens et illi assignans inopi. . . Quamdiu talem habebis sudem, nunquam in domo tua cervinæ carnis cibatio abundans deerit. Miser mendiculus . . . valde gavisus . . . veru in remotis infexit terrulæ locis, quæ silvestres frequentabant feræ . . . nulla transire poterat dies in quo non aut cervum aut cervam reperiret in veru infixo cecidisse."—Adamnan, ii. 37.

saw, in all that went on around him, and which he could turn to the profit of the poor or of his fellow-creatures: even in hunting or fishing he took pains to point out the happy moment and most favourable spot where the largest salmon or pike might be found.[1] Wherever he found himself in contact with the poor or with strangers, he drew them to himself and comforted them even more by the warm sympathy of his generous heart than by material benefits. He identified himself with their fears, their dangers, and their vexations. Always a peacemaker and consoler, he took advantage here of the night's shelter given him by a rich mountaineer to end a dispute between two angry neighbours;[2] and there made a chance meeting in a Highland gorge with a countryman an occasion for reassuring the peasant as to the consequences of the ravages made in his district by Pictish or Saxon invaders. "My good man," he said, "thy poor cattle and thy little all have fallen into the hands of the robbers; but thy dear little family is safe—go home and be comforted."[3]

He pacifies and consoles all those whom he meets.

Such was this tender and gentle soul. His charity

[1] ADAMNAN, ii. 19.

[2] "In domo cujus plebeii divitis. . . . Fortgini nomine . . . ubi cum sanctus hospitaretur, inter rusticanos contendentes duos . . . recta judicatione judicavit."—*Ibid.*, ii. 17.

[3] "Ubi, ait, habitas . . . tuam quam dicis provinciolam nunc barbari populantur vastatores. Quo audito, miser plebeius maritam et filios deplangere cœpit. Valde mœrentem consolans inquit: Vade, homuncule, vade, tua familiola tota in montem fugiens evasit: tua vero omnia pecuscula . . . omnemque supellectilem cum præda sævi raptores rapuere."—*Ibid.*, i. 46.

might sometimes seem to have degenerated into feebleness, so great was the pleasure he took in all the details of benevolence and Christian brotherhood; but let there appear an injustice to repair, an unfortunate individual to defend, an oppressor to punish, an outrage against humanity or misfortune to avenge, and Columba immediately awoke and displayed all the energy of his youth. The former man reappeared in a moment; his passionate temperament recovered the mastery—his distinctive character, vehement in expression and resolute in action, burst forth at every turn; and his natural boldness led him, in the face of all dangers, to lavish remonstrances, invectives, and threats, which the justice of God, too rarely visible in such cases, sometimes deigned to fulfil.

Among the many sufferers whom he found on his way, it is natural to suppose that the exiles, who were so numerous in consequence of the discords which rent the Celtic races, would most of all call forth his sympathy. Himself an exile, he was the natural protector of all who were exiled.[1] He took under his special guardianship a banished Pict, of noble family, probably one of those who had received him with kindness, and listened to his teachings

[1] "Almus pater, exsulum et depressorum pius patronus," says Manus O'Donnell (b. ii. c. 3), who was at once the grandnephew and biographer of the saint, with a sentiment only too natural in a scion of one of those great Irish families which have always preferred exile and destitution to apostasy.

at the time of his first missions in Northern Caledonia. Columba confided, or, as the historian says, recommended, assigned *in manum*, according to the custom which came to be general in feudal times, his banished friend to a chief called Feradagh, who occupied the large island of Islay, south of Iona, praying him to conceal his guest for some months among his clan and dependents. A few days after he had solemnly accepted the trust, this villain had the noble exile treacherously murdered, no doubt for the sake of the articles of value he had with him. When he received the news, Columba cried, "It is not to me, it is to God, that this wretched man, whose name shall be effaced out of the book of life, has lied. It is summer now, but before autumn comes—before he can eat of the meat which he is fattening for his table—he shall die a sudden death, and be dragged to hell." The indignant old man's prophecy was reported to Feradagh, who pretended to laugh at it, but nevertheless kept it in his mind. Before the beginning of autumn, he ordered a fattened pig to be killed and roasted, and even before the animal was entirely cooked gave orders that part of it should be served to him, in order to prove, at the earliest possible moment, the falsehood of the prophesied vengeance. But scarcely had he taken up the morsel, when, before he had carried it to his mouth, he fell back and died. Those who were present admired and trembled to see how the Lord God honoured and justified

Punishment of the exile's assassin.

His prophet;[1] and those who knew Columba's life as a young man recalled to each other how, at the very beginning of his monastic life, the murderer of the innocent maiden had fallen dead at the sound of his avenging voice.[2]

Robbers of royal race.

In his just wrath against the spoilers of the poor and the persecutors of the Church, he drew back before no danger, not even before the assassin's dagger. Among the reivers who infested Scottish Caledonia, making armed incursions into their neighbours' lands, and carrying on that system of pillage which, up to the eighteenth century, continued to characterise the existence of the Scottish clans, he had distinguished the sons of Donnell, who belonged to a branch of the family which ruled the Dalriadian colony. Columba did not hesitate to excommunicate them. Exasperated by this sentence, one of these powerful ill-doers, named or surnamed Lamm-Dess (*Right-hand*), took advantage of a visit which the great abbot paid to a distant island, and undertook

[1] "Quemdam de nobili Pictorum genere exsulem, in manum alicujus Feradachi divitis viri . . . diligenter assignans commendavit, ut in ejus comitatu, quasi unus de amicis, aliquos menses conversaretur. Quem cum tali commendatione de sancti manu viri commendatum suscepisset . . . trucidavit. . . . Non mihi, sed Deo infelix homunculus mentitus est, cujus nomen de libro vitæ delebitur. . . . Antequam de suilla degustet carne arboreo saginata fructu. . . . Despiciens irrisit sanctum. Scrofa nucum impinguata nucleis jugulatur . . . de qua celeriter ex interita partem sibi in veru celerius assari præcipit, ut de ea impatiens prægustans beati viri prophetationem destrueret . . . ad quam extensam manum priusquam ad os converteret . . . mortuus retro in dorsum cecidit. . . . Valde tremefacti, admirantes, Christum in sancto propheta honorificantes glorificarunt."—ADAMNAN, ii. 23.

[2] See *ante*, page 108.

to murder him in his sleep. But Finn-Lugh, one of the saint's companions, having had some suspicion or instinctive presentiment of danger, and desiring to save his father's life by the sacrifice of his own, borrowed Columba's cowl, and wrapped himself in it. The assassin struck him whom he found clothed in the well-known costume of the abbot, and then fled. But the sacred vestment proved impenetrable armour to the generous disciple, who was not even wounded. Columba, when informed of the event, said nothing at the moment. But a year after, when he had returned to Iona, the abbot said to his community, "A year ago Lamm-Dess did his best to murder my dear Finn-Lugh in my place; now at this moment it is he who is being killed." And, in fact, the news shortly arrived that the assassin had just died under the sword of a warrior, who struck the fatal blow while invoking the name of Columba, in a fight which brought the depredations of these reivers to an end.[1]

Some time before, another criminal of the same family, called Joan, had chosen for his victim one of the hosts of Columba, one of those poor men whom the abbot had enriched by his blessing in exchange for the hospitality which even in their

[1] "In insula Himba commoratus. . . . Ille vero sceleratus, cujus nomen latine *Manus dextera* dicitur. . . . Usque in hanc diem integratus est annus ex quo Lamm Dess in quantum potuit Finn Lughum meum meo jugulavit vice; sed et ipse, ut æstimo, hac in hora jugulatur. In aliqua virorum utrinque acta belligeratione, Cronani filii Baithani jaculo transfixus in nomine, ut fertur, sancti Columbæ, emisso, interimit, et post ejus interitum viri belligerare cessarunt."—ADAMNAN, ii. 24.

poverty they had not refused. This poor man lived on the wild and barren peninsula of Ardnamurchan, a sombre mass which rises up out of the waves of the Atlantic, and forms the most western point of the Scottish mainland. The benediction of the missionary had brought him good fortune, as had been the case with the peasant of Lochaber, and his five cows, too, had multiplied, and were then more than a hundred in number. Columba was not satisfied with merely enriching his humble friend, but gave him also a place in his affections, and had even bestowed upon him his own name; so that all his neighbours called him *Columbain*, the friend of St Columba. Three times in succession, Joan, the princely spoiler, had pillaged and ravaged the house of the enriched peasant, the friend of the abbot of Iona; the third time, as he went back with his bravos, laden with booty, to the boat which awaited him on the beach, he met the great abbot, whom he had supposed far distant. Columba reproved him for his exactions and crimes, and entreated him to give up his prey; but the reiver continued his course, and answered only by an immovable silence, until he had gained the beach and entered his boat. As soon as he was in his vessel, he began to answer the abbot's prayers by mockeries and insults. Then the noble old man plunged into the sea, up to his knees, as if to cling to the boat which contained the spoils of his friend; and when it went off he remained for some time with his two hands raised

towards heaven, praying with ardour. When his prayer was ended, he came out of the water, and returned to his companions, who were seated on a neighbouring mound, to dry himself. After a pause, he said to them, "This miserable man, this evil-doer, who despises Christ in His servants, shall never more land upon the shore from which you have seen him depart—he shall never touch land again. To-day a little cloud begins to rise in the north, and from that cloud comes a tempest that shall swallow him up, him and his; not one single soul shall escape to tell the tale." The day was fine, the sea calm, and the sky perfectly serene. Notwithstanding, the cloud which Columba had announced soon appeared; and the spectators, turning their eyes to the sea, saw the tempest gather, increase, and pursue the spoilers. The storm reached them between the islands of Mull and Colonsay, from whose shores their boat was seen to sink and perish, with all its crew and all its spoils.[1]

[1] "Columbanum, quem de paupere virtus benedictionis ejus ditem fecit, valde diligebat. . . . Quidam malefactor homo, bonorum persecutor . . . prosequebatur sancti amicum Columbæ. . . . Accidit ut tertia vice . . . beatum virum, quem quasi longius positum despexerat, ad navem revertens mœste obviam haberet. . . . Immitis et insuadibilis permanens . . . navimque cum præda ascendens, beatum virum subsannabat et deridebat. Quem sanctus ad mare usque prosecutus est, vitreasque intrans aquas usque ad genua æquoreas, levatis ad cœlum ambis manibus, Christum intente precatur. . . . Hic miserabilis homuncio, qui Christum in suis despexit servis, ad portum, a quo nuper coram vobis emigravit, nunquam revertetur; sed nec ad alias quas appetit, terras . . . cum suis perveniet malis cooperatoribus. Hodie, quam mox videbitis, de nube a borea orta immitis immissa procella eum cum sociis submerget: nec de eis etiam unus remanebit fabulator. . . . Die serenissima, et ecce de mari oborta,

We have all read in Cæsar's Commentaries how, when he landed on the shores of Britain, the standard-bearer of the tenth legion threw himself into the sea, up to the knees in water, to encourage his comrades. Thanks to the perverse complaisance of history for all feats of force, this incident is immortal. Cæsar, however, moved by depraved ambition, came but to oppress a free and innocent race, and to bring it under the odious yoke of Roman tyranny, of which, happily, it has retained no trace. How much grander and more worthy of recollection, I do not say to every Christian, but to every upright soul, is the sight offered to us at the other extremity of the great Britannic Isle, by this old monk, who also rushed into the sea up to his knees—but to pursue a savage oppressor, in the interest of an obscure victim, thus claiming for himself, under his legendary aureole, the everlasting greatness of humanity, justice, and pity!

sicut sanctus dixerat, nubes cum magno fragore venti emissa, raptorem cum præda inter Maleam et Colonsam insulas inveniens . . . submersit."—ADAMNAN, ii. 22.

CHAPTER VII.

COLUMBA'S LAST YEARS—HIS DEATH—HIS CHARACTER.

Columba the confidant of the joys and consoler of the sorrows of domestic life.—He blesses little Hector with the fair locks.—He prays for a woman in her delivery ; he reconciles the wife of a pilot to her husband.—Vision of the saved wife who receives her husband in heaven. —He continues his missions to the end of his life.—Visions before death.—The Angels' Hill.—Increase of austerities.—Nettle-soup his sole food.—A supernatural light surrounds him during his nightly work and prayers.—His death is retarded for four years by the prayers of the community.—When this respite has expired, he takes leave of the monks at their work ; he visits and blesses the granaries of the monastery.—He announces his death to his attendant Diarmid.—His farewell to his old white horse.—Last benediction to the isle of Iona ; last work of transcription ; last message to his community.—He dies in the church.—Review of his life and character.

By the side of the terrible acts of vengeance which have just been narrated, the student loves to find in this bold enemy of the wicked and the oppressor a gentle and familiar sympathy for all the affections as well as all the trials of domestic life. Rich and poor, kings and peasants, awoke in his breast the same kindly emotion, expressed with the same fulness. When King Aïdan brought his children to him, and spoke of his anxiety about their future

lives, he did not content himself with seeing the eldest. "Have you none younger?" said the abbot; "bring them all—let me hold them in my arms and on my heart!" And when the younger children were brought, one fair-haired boy, Hector (Eochaidh Buidhe), came forward running, and threw himself upon the saint's knees. Columba held him long pressed to his heart, then kissed his forehead, blessed him, and prophesied for him a long life, a prosperous reign, and a great posterity.[1]

Let us listen while his biographer tells how he came to the aid of a woman in extremity, and how he made peace in a divided household. One day at Iona he suddenly stopped short while reading, and said with a smile to his monks, "I must now go and pray for a poor little woman who is in the pains of childbirth and suffers like a true daughter of Eve. She is down yonder in Ireland, and reckons upon my prayers, for she is my kinswoman, and of my mother's family." Upon this he hastened to the church, and when his prayer was ended returned to his brethren, saying—"She

[1] "Sed nunc si alios juniores habes, ad me veniant, et quem ex eis elegerit Dominus regem, subito super meum irruit gremium . . . quibus accessis. . . . Echodius Buidhe adveniens in sinu ejus recubuit. Statimque sanctus eum osculatus benedixit."—ADAMNAN, i. 9. Columba had predicted that none of the four elder sons of the king should succeed him, and that they should all perish in war. The three eldest were actually killed in the battle for which Columba had rung the bells of his new monastery (see page 184), and the fourth also died sword in hand "in Saxonia bellica, in strage." The kings of Scotland, whose lineage is traced to the Dalriadians, were probably descendants of the fair-haired Hector.

is delivered. The Lord Jesus, who deigned to be born of a woman, has come to her aid; this time she will not die."[1]

He reconciles a pilot's wife with her husband.

Another day, while he was visiting an island on the Irish coast, a pilot came to him to complain of his wife, who had taken an aversion for him. The abbot called her and reminded her of the duties imposed upon her by the law of the Lord. "I am ready to do everything," said the woman—"I will obey you in the hardest things you can command. I do not draw back from any of the cares of the house. I will go even, if it is desired, on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, or I will shut myself up in a nunnery—in short, I will do everything except live with him."

The abbot answered that there could be no question of pilgrimage or of a convent so long as her husband lived; "but," he added, "let us try to pray God, all three, fasting—you, your husband, and myself."

"Ah," said the woman, "I know that you can obtain even what is impossible from God." However, his proposal was carried out—the three fasted, and Columba passed the whole night in prayer

[1] "A lectione surgit et subridens ait: Nunc ad oratorium mihi properandum est ut pro quadam misellula deprecer femina, quæ nunc in Hibernia nomen hujus inclamitans commemorat Columbæ, in magnis parturitionis, ut filia Evæ, difficillimæ torta punitionibus . . . quia et mihi cognationis est . . . de parentela matris meæ. . . . Ad ecclesiam currit. . . . Nunc propitius Dominus Jesus, de muliere progenitus, opportune miseræ subveniens, prospere prolem peperit; nec hac vice morietur. Eadem hora, nomen ejus invocans, absoluta salutem recuperavit. Ita ab aliquibus postea de Scotia et de eadem regione ubi mulier inhabitabat, transmeantibus, intimatum est."—ADAMNAN, ii. 40.

without ever closing his eyes. Next morning he said to the woman, with the gentle irony which he so often employed, "Tell me to what convent are you bound after your yesterday's projects?" "To none," said the woman; "my heart has been changed to-night. I know not how I have passed from hate to love." And from that day until the hour of her death she lived in a tender and faithful union with her husband.[1]

But Columba fortunately was connected with other households more united, where he could admire the happiness of his friends without feeling himself compelled to make peace. From his sanctuary at Iona his habitual solicitude and watchful sympathy followed them to their last hour. One day he was alone with one of the Saxons whom he had converted and attached to his community, and who was the baker of the monks; while this stranger prepared his bread, he heard the abbot say, looking up to heaven—"Oh! happy, happy woman! She

[1] "De quodam guberneta. . . . De sua querebatur uxore quæ . . . eum ad maritalem nullo modo admittebat concubitum. . . . Omnia quæcumque mihi præceperis, sum parata, quamlibet sint valde laboriosa, adimplere, excepto uno, ut me nullo modo in uno lecto dormire cum Lugneo. Omnem domus curam exercere non recuso, aut etiam si jubeas, maria transiens in aliquo puellarum monasterio permanere. . . . Scio quod tibi impossibile non erit ut ea quæ . . . vel impossibilia videmus, a Deo impetrata donentur. . . . Nocte subsequenti sanctus insomnis pro eis deprecatus est. . . . O femina, si, ut hesterna dicebas die, parata hodie es ad feminarum emigrare monasteriolum? . . . Nunc quem heri oderam, hodie amo: cor enim meum hac nocte præterita, quo modo ignoro, in me immutatum est de odio in amorem. . . . Anima ejusdem maritæ indissociabiliter in amore conglutinata est mariti, ut illa maritalis concubitus debita . . . nullo modo deinceps recusaret."—ADAMNAN, ii. 41.

goes into heaven with a guard of angels." Exactly a year after, the abbot and the Saxon baker were again together. "I see the woman," said Columba, "of whom I spoke to thee last year coming down from heaven to meet the soul of her husband, who has just died. She contends with powerful enemies for that dear soul, by the help of the holy angels: she gains the day, she triumphs, because her goodman has been a just man—and the two are united again in the home of everlasting consolation."[1]

This vision was preceded and followed by many others of the same description, in which the blessed death of many bishops and monks, his friends and contemporaries, were announced to him. They seem to have been intended to give him a glimpse of that heaven into which God was shortly to call him. Nor was it only at Iona that these supernatural graces were accorded to him, for he did not limit his unwearied activity to the narrow enclosure of that island, any more in the decline of his life than in the earlier period of his emigration. Up to old age he continued to have sufficient strength and courage to return to the most northern regions

[1] "Quidam religiosus frater, Genereus nomine, Saxo, pistor, opus pistorum exercens. . . . Felix mulier, felix bene morata, cujus animam nunc angeli Dei ad paradisum evehunt. . . . Ecce mulier, de qua te præsente dixeram præterito anno. Nunc mariti sui religiosi cujusdam plebeii in aere obviat animæ, et cum sanctis angelis contra æmulas pro eo belligerat potestates; quorum adminiculo ejusdem homuncionis justitia suffragante, a dæmoniacis belligerationibus erepta, ad æternæ refrigerationis locum anima ipsius est perducta."—ADAMNAN, iii. 10.

where he had preached the faith to the Picts; and it was in one of his last missionary journeys, when upon the banks of Loch Ness, to the north of the great line of waters which cuts Caledonia in two, at a distance of fifty leagues from Iona, that he was permitted to see the angels come to meet the soul of the old Pict, who, faithful during all his life to the law of nature, received baptism, and with it eternal salvation, from the great missionary's hands.[1]

At this period the angels, whom he saw carrying to heaven the soul of the just and penitent, and aiding the believing wife to make an entrance there for her husband, continually appeared to him and hovered about him. Making all possible allowance for the exaggerations and fables which the proverbial credulity of Celtic nations have added to the legends of their saints,[2] no Christian will be tempted to deny the verified narratives which bear witness, in Columba's case as well as in that of the other saints, to supernatural appearances which enriched his life, and espe-

[1] See *ante*, page 176. "Ultra Britanniæ Dorsum iter agens, secus Nisæ fluminis lacum . . . sanctus senex."—ADAMNAN, iii. 14.

[2] Let us quote on this point, from the most illustrious of hagiographers, Bollandus himself, in his prefatory remarks to the life of the first Irish saint who came before him: "Multa continet admiranda portenta, sed usitata apud gentem illam simplicem et sanctam; neque sacris dogmatibus aut Dei erga electos suos suavissimæ providentiæ repugnantia; sunt tamen fortassis nonnulla imperitorum libratorum culpa vitiata aut amplificata. Quod in gentilium suorum rebus gestis animadverti oportere nos docuit Henricus Fitzsimon societatis nostræ theologus, egregio rerum usu præditus. . . . Satis est lectorem monuisse ut cum discretione ea legat quæ prodigiosa, et crebro similia miracula commemorant, nisi ab sapientibus scripta auctoribus sunt."—*Acta Sanctorum*, January, vol. i. p. 43.

cially his old age. Those wonderful soldiers of virtue and Christian truth needed such miracles to help them to support the toils and live through the trials of their dangerous mission. They required to ascend from time to time into celestial regions to find strength there for their continual struggle against all obstacles and perils and continually renewed temptations—and to learn to brave the enmities, the savage manners, and blind hatreds of the nations whom it was the aim of their lives to set free.

"Let no one follow me to-day," Columba said one morning with unusual severity to the assembled community: "I would be alone in the little plain to the west of the isle." He was obeyed; but a brother, more curious and less obedient than the rest, followed him far off, and saw him, erect and motionless, with his hands and his eyes raised to heaven, standing on a sandy hillock, where he was soon surrounded by a crowd of angels, who came to bear him company and to talk with him. The hillock has to this day retained the name of the Angels' Hill.[1] And the citizens of the celestial country, as they were called at Iona, came often to console and strengthen their future companion during the long winter nights which he passed in prayer in some retired corner, voluntarily exposed to all the torments of sleeplessness and cold.[2]

[1] *Cnocan Aingel* (colliculus Angelorum), in the map of the island by Graham.

[2] "Cum ingenti animadversione dixit: Hodie . . . solus exire cupio,

For as he approached the end of his career this great servant of God consumed his strength in vigils, fasts, and dangerous macerations. His life, which had been so full of generous struggles, hard trial, and toil in the service of God and his neighbour, seemed to him neither full enough nor pure enough. In proportion as the end drew near he redoubled his austerities and mortifications. Every night, according to one of his biographers, he plunged into cold water and remained there for the time necessary to recite an entire psalter.[1] One day, when, bent by age, he sought, perhaps in a neighbouring island, a retirement still more profound than usual, in which to pray, he saw a poor woman gathering wild herbs and even nettles, who told him that her poverty was such as to forbid her all other food. Upon which the old abbot reproached himself bitterly that he had not yet come to that point. "See," he said, "this poor woman, who finds her miserable life worth the trouble of being thus prolonged; and we, who profess to deserve heaven by our austerities, we live in luxury!" When he went back to his monastery he gave orders

nemo itaque ex vobis me sequatur. . . . Cœlestis patriæ cives . . . sanctum virum orantem circumstare . . . albatis induti vestibus, et post aliquam sermocinationem cum beato viro. . . . Quantæ et quales ad beatum virum in hyemalibus plerumque noctibus insomnem, et in locis remotioribus, aliis quiescentibus, orantem, angelicæ fuerint et suaves frequentationes."—ADAMNAN, iii. 16.

[1] O'DONNELL, iii. 37. This incredible power of supporting cold in the damp and icy climate of the British Isles is one of the most marked features in the penances which the Irish saints inflicted on themselves.—See COLGAN, *Acta SS. Hiberniæ*.

that he should be served with no other food than the wild and bitter herbs with which the beggar supported her existence; and he severely reproved his minister, Diarmid,[1] who had come from Ireland with him, when he, out of compassion for his master's old age and weakness, threw a little butter into the caldron in which this miserable fare was cooked.[2]

A supernatural light surrounds him during his nocturnal work and prayers.

The celestial light which was soon to receive him began already to surround him like a garment or a shroud. His monks told each other that the solitary cell in the isle of Himba, near Iona, which he had built for himself, was lighted up every night by a great light, which could be seen through the chinks of the door and keyhole, while the abbot chanted unknown canticles till daybreak. After having remained there three days and nights without food, he came out, full of joy at having discovered the mysterious meaning of several texts of Holy Scripture, which up to that time he had not understood.[3] When he returned to Iona to die,

[1] MS. quoted by Reeves, p. 245, Appendix. The name of Diarmid or Diormid—the same as that of the king against whom Columba raised a civil war—was at a later date changed into that of Dermott, which is still to be found among the Irish.

[2] "Cum senio jam gravatus in quodam secessu ab aliis remotiori orationi vocali intentus deambularet. . . . Ecce paupercula hæc femina. . . Et quid nos qui . . . laxius vivimus? . . . Diermitius . . . qui debebat eam misellam escam parare . . . per fistulam instillatoriam modicum liquefacti butyri et ollæ . . . infudit. . . . Sic Christi miles ultimam senectutem in continua carnis maceratione usque ad exitum . . . perduxit."—O'Donnell, *Vita Quinta*, iii. 32.

[3] "De qua domo immensæ claritatis radii, per rimulas valvarum et clavium foramina, erumpentes, noctu videbantur. Carmina quoque

continuing faithful to his custom of spending a great part of the night in prayer, he bore about with him everywhere the miraculous light which already surrounded him like the nimbus of his holiness. The entire community was involuntarily agitated by the enjoyment of that foretaste of paradise. One winter's night, a young man who was destined to succeed Columba as fourth abbot of Iona remained in the church while the others slept: all at once he saw the abbot come in preceded by a golden light which fell from the heights of the vaulted roof, and lighted all the corners of the building, even including the little lateral oratory where the young monk hid himself in alarm.[1] All who passed during the night before the church, while their old abbot prayed, were startled by this light, which dazzled them like lightning.[2] Another of the young monks, whose education was specially directed by the abbot himself, resolved to ascertain whether the same illumination existed in Columba's cell; and notwithstanding that he had been expressly forbidden to do so, he got up in the night and went groping to the door of the cell to look

spiritalia et ante inaudita decantari ab eo audiebantur. . . . Scripturarum . . . quæque obscura et difficillima, plana et luce clarius aperta, mundissimi cordis oculis patebant."—ADAMNAN, iii. 18.

[1] "Simulque cum eo (ingreditur) aurea lux, de cœli altitudine descendens, totum illud ecclesiæ spatium replens . . . et penetrans usque in illius exedriolæ separatum conclave ubi se Virgnous in quantum potuit latitare conabatur . . . exterritus."—ADAMNAN, iii. 19. Virgnous, or Fergna Brit, fourth abbot of Iona, from 605 to 625. He told this incident to his nephew, by whom it was told to Adamnan.

[2] "Fulguralis lux."—*Ibid.*, iii. 20.

in, but fled immediately, blinded by the light that filled it.[1]

These signs, which were the forerunners of his deliverance, showed themselves for several years towards the end of his life, which he believed and hoped was nearer its termination than it proved to be. But this remnant of existence, from which he sighed to be liberated, was held fast by the filial love of his disciples, and the ardent prayers of so many new Christian communities founded or ministered to by his zealous care. Two of his monks, one Irish and one Saxon, of the number of those whom he admitted to his cell to help him in his labour or to execute his instructions, saw him one day change countenance, and perceived in his face a sudden expression of the most contrary emotions: first a beatific joy, which made him raise to heaven a look full of the sweetest and tenderest gratitude; but a minute after this ray of supernatural joy gave place to an expression of heavy and profound sadness. The two spectators pressed him with questions which he refused to answer. At length they threw themselves at his knees and begged him, with tears, not to afflict them by hiding what had been revealed to him. "Dear children," he said to them, "I do not wish to afflict you. . . . Know, then, that it is thirty years to-day since I began my

1 "Cuidam suo sapientiam discenti alumno . . . qui, contra interdictum, in noctis silentio accessit . . . callide explorans . . . oculos ad clavium foramina posuit. . . . Repletum hospitiolum cœlestis splendore claritudinis, quam non sustinens intueri, aufugit."—ADAMNAN, iii. 20.

pilgrimage in Caledonia. I have long prayed God to let my exile end with this thirtieth year, and to recall me to the heavenly country. When you saw me so joyous, it was because I could already see the angels who came to seek my soul. But all at once they stopped short, down there upon that rock at the farthest limit of the sea which surrounds our island, as if they would approach to take me, and could not. And, in truth, they could not, because the Lord has paid less regard to my ardent prayer than to that of the many churches which have prayed for me, and which have obtained, against my will, that I should still dwell in this body for four years. This is the reason of my sadness. But in four years I shall die without being sick; in four years, I know it and see it, they will come back, these holy angels, and I shall take my flight with them towards the Lord."[1]

He takes leave of the monks at their work.

At the end of the four years thus fixed he arranged everything for his departure. It was the end of May, and it was his desire to take leave of the monks who worked in the fields in the only fertile part of Iona, the western side. His great age pre-

[1] "Facies ejus subita, mirifica et lætifica hilaritate effloruit. . . . Incomparabili repletus gaudio, valde lætificabatur. Tum illa sapida et suavis lætificatio in mœstam convertitur tristificationem. . . . Duo . . . qui . . . ejus tugurioli ad januam stabant . . . illacrymati, ingemisculantes. . . . Quia vos, ait, amo, tristificari nolo. . . . Usque in hunc præsentem diem, meæ in Britannia peregrinationis terdeni completi sunt anni. . . . Sed ecce nunc, subito retardati, ultra nostræ fretum insulæ stant in rupe . . . cum sanctis mihi obviaturis illo tempore, ad Dominum lætus emigrabo."—ADAMNAN, iii. 22.

vented him from walking, and he was drawn in a car by oxen. When he reached the labourers he said to them, "I greatly desired to die a month ago, on Easter-day, and it was granted to me; but I preferred to wait a little longer, in order that the festival might not be changed into a day of sadness for you." And when all wept he did all he could to console them. Then turning towards the east, from the top of his rustic chariot he blessed the island and all its inhabitants—a blessing which, according to local tradition, was like that of St Patrick in Ireland, and drove, from that day, all vipers and venomous creatures out of the island.[1]

He visits and blesses the monastic granary.

On Saturday in the following week he went, leaning on his faithful attendant Diarmid, to bless the granary of the monastery. Seeing there two great heaps of corn, the fruit of the last harvest, he said, "I see with joy that my dear monastic family, if I must leave them this year, will not at least suffer from famine." "Dear father," said Diarmid, "why do you thus sadden us by talking of your death?" "Ah, well," said the abbot, "here is a little secret which I will tell thee if thou wilt swear on thy knees to tell no one before I am gone. To-day is Saturday, the day which the

[1] "Ad visitandos fratres operarios senex senio fessus, plaustro vectus, pergit. . . . In occidua insulæ Ionæ laborantes parte . . . ut erat in vehiculo sedens, ad orientem suam convertens faciem, insulam cum insulanis benedixit habitatoribus. . . . Ex qua die, viperarum venena trisulcarum linguarum usque in hodiernam diem nullo modo aut homini aut pecori nocere potuere."—ADAMNAN, ii. 28, iii. 53.

Holy Scriptures call Sabbath or rest. And it will be truly my day of rest, for it shall be the last of my laborious life. This very night I shall enter into the path of my fathers. Thou weepest, dear Diarmid, but console thyself; it is my Lord Jesus Christ who deigns to invite me to rejoin Him; it is He who has revealed to me that my summons will come to-night."[1]

His farewell to the old white horse.

Then he left the storehouse to return to the monastery, but when he had gone half-way stopped to rest at a spot which is still marked by one of the ancient crosses of Iona.[2] At this moment an ancient and faithful servant, the old white horse which had been employed to carry milk from the dairy daily to the monastery, came towards him. He came and put his head upon his master's shoulder, as if to take leave of him. The eyes of the old horse had an expression so pathetic that they seemed to be bathed in tears. Diarmid would have sent the animal away, but the good old man forbade him. "The horse loves me," he said, "leave him with me; let him weep for my departure. The Creator has revealed to this poor animal what he has hidden from thee, a reasonable man." Upon which, still

[1] "Quod cum benedixisset et duos in eo frugum sequestratos acervos. . . . Valde congratulor meis familiaribus monachis, quia hoc etiam anno si a vobis emigrare me oportuerit, annum sufficientem habebitis. . . . Aliquem arcanum habeo sermusculum (*sic*). . . . Et mihi vere est sabbatum hæc hodierna dies . . . in qua post meas laborationum molestias sabbatizo. . . . Jam enim Dominus meus Jesus Christus me invitare dignatur."—ADAMNAN, iii. 23.

[2] The monument called *Maclean's Cross*.

caressing the faithful brute, he gave him a last blessing.[1] When this was done he used the remnants of his strength to climb to the top of a hillock from which he could see all the isle and the monastery, and there lifted up his hands to pronounce a prophetic benediction on the sanctuary he had created. "This little spot, so small and low, shall be greatly honoured, not only by the Scots kings and people, but also by foreign chiefs and barbarous nations; and it shall be venerated even by the saints of other Churches."

After this he went down to the monastery, entered his cell, and began to work for the last time. He was then occupied in transcribing the Psalter. When he had come to the 33d Psalm and the verse, *Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono*, he stopped short. "I must stop here," he said, "Baithen will write the rest." Baithen, as has been seen, was the steward of Iona, and was to become its abbot. After this the aged saint was present at the vigil service before Sunday in the church. When he returned to his cell he seated himself upon the naked stones which served the septuagenarian for bed and pillow, and which were shown for nearly a

[1] "Media via ubi postea crux molari lapide infixa, hodieque stans . . . in margine cernitur viæ. . . . Senio fessus, paululum sedens. . . . Ecce albus occurrit caballus, obediens servitor . . . caput in sinu ejus ponens . . . dominum a se suum mox emigraturum . . . cœpit plangere uberumque quasi homo fundere et valde spumeas flere lacrymas. . . . Sine hunc, sine nostri amatorem, ut in hunc meum sinum fletus effundat amarissimi plangoris. . . . Mœstum a se equum benedixit ministratorem." —Adamnan, iii. 23.

century near his tomb.[1] Then he intrusted to his only companion a last message for the community: "Dear children, this is what I command with my last words—let peace and charity, a charity mutual and sincere, reign always among you! If you act thus, following the example of the saints, God who strengthens the just will help you, and I, who shall be near Him, will intercede on your behalf, and you shall obtain of Him not only all the necessities of the present life in sufficient quantity, but still more the rewards of eternal life, reserved for those who keep His law."[2]

These were his last words. As soon as the midnight bell had rung for the matins of the Sunday festival, he rose and hastened before the other monks to the church, where he knelt down before the altar. Diarmid followed him, but as the church was not yet lighted he could only find him by groping and crying in a plaintive voice, "Where art thou, my father?" He found Columba lying before the altar, and, placing himself at his side, raised the old abbot's venerable head upon his knees. The whole

[1] "Monticellum monasterio supereminentem ascendens, in vertice ejus paululum stans, elevatis manibus, benedixit cœnobium: Huic loco, quamlibet angusto et vili, non tantum Scotorum reges cum populis, sed etiam barbararum et exterarum gentium regnatores cum plebibus suis. . . . Sedebat in tugurio Psalterium scribens. . . . Post talem perscriptum versum paginæ, ad vespertinalem dominicæ noctis missam" (note this singular expression for *vigiles*) "ingreditur ecclesiam. Qua consummata, ad hospitiolum revertens, in lectulo residet pernox, ubi pro stramine nudam habebat petram et pro pulvillo lapidem, qui hodie quasi quidam juxta sepulcrum ejus titulus stat monumenti."—ADAMNAN, iii. 23.

[2] "Hæc vobis, o filioli, novissima commendo verba, ut inter vos mutuam et non fictam habeatis charitatem, cum pace."—*Ibid.*

community soon arrived with lights, and wept as one man at the sight of their dying father. Columba opened his eyes once more, and turned them to his children on either side with a look full of serene and radiant joy. Then with the aid of Diarmid he raised, as best he might, his right hand to bless them all; his hand dropped, the last sigh came from his lips; and his face remained calm and sweet like that of a man who in his sleep had seen a vision of heaven.[1]

He dies in the church, 9th June 597.

Such was the life and death of the first great apostle of Great Britain. We have lingered, perhaps, too long on the grand form of this monk, rising up before us from the midst of the Hebridean sea, who, for the third part of a century, spread over those sterile isles, and gloomy distant shores, a pure and

[1] "Post quæ conticuit. . . . Vix media nocte pulsata personante clocca, festinus surgens ad ecclesiam pergit, citiorque ceteris currens, solus introgressus juxta altare. Diormitius ecclesiam ingrediens flebili ingeminat voce: Ubi es, pater? Et necdum allatis fratrum lucernis, per tenebras palpans, sanctum ante altarium recubantem invenit: quem paululum erigens et juxta sedens sanctum in suo gremio posuit caput. Et inter hæc cœtus monachorum cum luminaribus accurrens, patre viso moriente, cœpit plangere. Et, ut *ab aliquibus qui præsentes inerant didicimus*, sanctus, necdum egrediente animo, apertis sursum oculis, ad utrumque latus cum mira vultus hilaritate et lætitia circumspiciebat; sanctos scilicet obvios intuens angelos. Diormitius tum sanctam sublevat ad benedicendum sancti monachorum chorum dexteram manum. Sed et ipse venerabilis pater in quantum poterat, simul suam movebat manum. Et post sanctam benedictionem taliter significatam, continuo spiritum exhalavit. Facies rubens, et mirum in modum angelica visione exhilarata, in tantum remansit, ut non quasi mortui, sed dormientis videretur viventis."—ADAMNAN, iii. 23. The narrative of Adamnan is an almost literal reproduction of that of Cummian, the first known biographer of the saint.

fertilising light. In a confused age and unknown region he displayed all that is greatest and purest, and, it must be added, most easily forgotten in human genius: the gift of ruling souls by ruling himself.[1] To select the most marked and graphic incidents from the general tissue of his life, and those most fit to unfold that which attracts the modern reader—that is, his personal character and influence upon contemporary events—from a world of minute details having almost exclusive reference to matters supernatural or ascetical, has been no easy task. But when this is done, it becomes comparatively easy to represent to ourselves the tall old man, with his fine and regular features, his sweet and powerful voice, the Irish tonsure high on his shaven head, and his long locks falling behind, clothed with his monastic cowl, and seated at the prow of his coracle, steering through the misty archipelago and narrow lakes of the north of Scotland, and bearing from isle to isle and from shore to shore, light, justice, and truth, the life of the conscience and of the soul.

One loves above all to study the depths of that soul, and the changes which had taken place in it since its youth. No more than his namesake of Luxeuil, the monastic apostle of Burgundy, was he of the Picts and Scots a *Columba*. Gentleness was of all qualities precisely the one in which he failed

[1] "Animarum dux," said the angel who announced his birth to his mother. This expression is also found in Adamnan (i. 2), but placed in the mouth of Columba, and applied by him to another saint.

the most. At the beginning of his life the future abbot of Iona showed himself still more than the abbot of Luxeuil to be animated by all the vivacities of his age, associated with all the struggles and discords of his race and country. He was vindictive, passionate, bold, a man of strife, born a soldier rather than a monk, and known, praised, and blamed as a soldier—so that even in his lifetime he was invoked in fight;[1] and continued a soldier, *insulanus miles*,[2] even upon the island rock from which he rushed forth to preach, convert, enlighten, reconcile, and reprimand both princes and nations, men and women, laymen and clerks.

He was at the same time full of contradictions and contrasts—at once tender and irritable, rude and courteous, ironical and compassionate, caressing and imperious, grateful and revengeful—led by pity as well as by wrath, ever moved by generous passions, and among all passions fired to the very end of his life by two which his countrymen understand the best, the love of poetry and the love of country. Little inclined to melancholy when he had once surmounted the great sorrow of his life, which was his exile; little disposed even, save towards the end, to contemplation or solitude, but trained by prayer and austerities to triumphs of evangelical exposition; despising rest, untiring in mental and manual toil;[3] born for eloquence, and gifted with a voice so

[1] See *ante*, page 247, note. [2] ADAMNAN, *Præfat.*

[3] "Nullum etiam unius horæ intervallum transire poterat, quo non

penetrating and sonorous that it was thought of afterwards as one of the most miraculous gifts that he had received of God;[1] frank and loyal, original and powerful in his words as in his actions—in cloister and mission and parliament, on land and on sea, in Ireland as in Scotland, always swayed by the love of God and of his neighbour, whom it was his will and pleasure to serve with an impassioned uprightness. Such was Columba. Besides the monk and missionary there was in him the makings of a sailor, soldier, poet, and orator. To us, looking back, he appears a personage as singular as he is lovable, in whom, through all the mists of the past and all the cross-lights of legend, the man may still be recognised under the saint—a man capable and worthy of the supreme honour of holiness, since he knew how to subdue his inclinations, his weakness, his instincts, and his passions, and to transform them into docile and invincible weapons for the salvation of souls and the glory of God.

orationi, aut lectioni, vel scriptioni, vel etiam alicui operationi, incumberet. Jejunationum et vigilarum indefessis laboribus, sine ulla intermissione, die noctuque ita occupatus, ut supra humanam possibilitatem pondus uniuscujusque videretur specialis operis. Et inter hæc omnibus carus, hilarem semper faciem ostendens, spiritus sancti gaudio intimis lætificabatur præcordiis."—ADAMNAN, *Præf.* ii.

[1] "Ab expertis quibusdam de voce beati psalmodiæ viri indubitanter traditum est. Quæ vox in ecclesia cum fratribus decantatis, aliquando per quingentos passus . . . aliquando per mille incomparabiliter elevata modo audiebatur. Mirum dictu! Nec in auribus eorum qui secum in ecclesia stabant vox ejus modum humanæ vocis in clamoris granditate excedebat. . . . Similiter enim in auribus prope et longe audientium personabat."—ADAMNAN, i. 37. In another passage he calls it "sermone nitidus."

CHAPTER VIII.

SPIRITUAL DESCENDANTS OF ST COLUMBA.

His posthumous glory: miraculous visions on the night of his death: rapid extension of his worship.—Note upon his supposed journey to Rome, and residence there, in search of the relics of St Martin.—His solitary funeral and tomb at Iona. — His translation to Ireland, where he rests between St Patrick and St Bridget.—He is, like Bridget, feared by the Anglo-Norman conquerors.—John de Courcy and Richard Strongbow.—The *Vengeance of Columba.*—Supremacy of Iona over the Celtic churches of Caledonia and the north of Ireland. —Singular privilege and primacy of the abbot of Iona in respect to bishops. — The ecclesiastical organisation of Celtic countries exclusively monastic. — Moderation and respect of Columba for the episcopal rank.— He left behind him no special rule.—That which he followed differed in no respect from the usual customs of the monastic order, which proves the exact observance of all the precepts of the Church, and the chimerical nature of all speculations upon the primitive Protestantism of the Celtic Church. — But he founded an order, which lasted several centuries under the title of the Family of Columb-Kill.—The clan and family spirit was the governing principle of Scottish monasticism.—Baithen and the eleven first successors of Columba at Iona were all members of the same race.— The two lines, lay and ecclesiastical, of the great founders.—The headquarters of the order transferred from Iona to Kells, one of Columba's foundations in Ireland. — The *Coarbs.* — Posthumous influence of Columba upon the Church of Ireland.—*Lex Columcille.*— Monastic Ireland in the seventh century the principal centre of Christian knowledge and piety.—Each monastery a school.—The transcription of manuscripts, which had been one of Columba's favourite occupations, continued and extended by his family even upon the continent. —Historic Annals.—The *Festiloge* of Angus the Culdee.—Note upon the Culdees, and upon the foundation of St Andrews in Scotland.—

Propagation of Irish monasticism abroad.—Irish saints and monasteries in France, Germany, and Italy.—The Irish saint Cathal venerated in Calabria under the name of *San Cataldo*.—Monastic university of Lismore: crowd of foreign students, especially of Anglo-Saxons, in Irish monasteries.—Confusion of temporal affairs in Ireland.—Civil wars and massacres.—Notes upon king-monks.—Patriotic intervention of the monks.—Adamnan, biographer and ninth successor of Columba, and his *Law of the Innocents*.—They are driven from their cloisters by the English.—Influence of Columba in Scotland.—Traces of the ancient Caledonian Church in the Hebrides.—Apostolical mission of Kentigern in the country between the Clyde and the Mersey.—His meeting with Columba.—His connection with the king and queen of Strath-Clyde.—Legend of the queen's ring.—Neither Columba nor Kentigern acted upon the Anglo-Saxons, who continued pagans, and maintained a threatening attitude.—The last bishops of conquered Britain desert their churches.

The influence of Columba, as of all men really superior to their fellows, and especially of the saints, far from ceasing with his life, went on increasing after his death. The supernatural character of his virtues, the miracles which were attributed to his intercession with God, had for a long time left scarcely any doubt as to his sanctity. It was universally acknowledged after his death, and has since remained uncontested among all the Celtic races. The visions and miracles which went to prove it would fill a volume. On the night, and at the very hour, of his death, a holy old man in a distant monastery in Ireland, one of those whom the Celtic chroniclers call the victorious soldiers of Christ,[1] saw with the eyes of his mind the isle of Iona, which he had never

Miraculous visions on the night of his death.

[1] "Sanctus senex, Christi miles . . . justus et sapiens . . . cuidam æque Christiano militi . . . suam enarravit visionem. . . . Christi victor miles."

visited, flooded with miraculous light, and all the vault of heaven full of an innumerable army of shining angels, who went, singing celestial canticles, to bring away the holy soul of the great missionary. Upon the banks of a river,[1] in Columba's native land, another holy monk, while occupied with several others in fishing, saw, as also did his companions, the sky lighted up by a pillar of fire, which rose from earth to the highest heaven, and disappeared only after lighting up the whole scene with a radiance as of the sun at noon.[2]

Thus began the long succession of wonders by which the worship of Columba's holy memory is characterised among the Celtic races. This wor-

[1] The Finn, which, after having marked the boundary between the two counties of Tyrone and Donegal, throws itself into the Foyle, which flows by Derry.

[2] "Hac præterita nocte media, . . . et in hora beati exitus ejus Ionam insulam, ad quam corpore nunquam perveni, totam angelorum claritudine in spiritu vidi irradiatam, totaque spatia aeris usque ad æthera cœlorum eorumdem angelorum claritate illustrata; qui ad sane ipsius animam preferendam, de cœlis missi descenderunt innumeri. Altisona carminalia et valde suavia audivi angelicorum cœtuum cantica eodem momento egressionis inter angelicos sanctæ ipsius animæ ascendentes choros. . . . Ego et alii mecum viri laborantes in captura piscium in valle piscosi fluminis Fendæ subito totum aerei illustratum cœli spatium vidimus . . . et ecce, quasi quædam pergrandis ignea apparuit columna, quæ in illa nocte media sursum ascendens ita nobis videbatur mundum illustrare totum sicuti æsteus et meridianus sol, et postquam illa penetravit columna cœlum, quasi post occasum solis tenebræ succedunt. Non tantum nos . . . sed et alii multi piscatores, qui sparsim per diversas fluminales piscinas ejusdem fluminis piscabantur, sicut nobis post retulerunt, simili apparitione visa, magno pavore sunt perculsi." Adamnan takes pains to prove that he received the account of those nocturnal visions, the first, from old monks at Iona, to whom it had been told by a hermit from Ireland; and the second, from the very monk who had directed the fishing on that memorable night.

Rapid extension of his worship even to Rome.

ship, which seemed at one time concentrated in one of the smallest islets of the Atlantic, extended in less than a century after his death, not only throughout all Ireland and Great Britain, but into Gaul, Spain, and Italy, and even to Rome,[1] which some legends, insufficiently verified, describe him as having visited during the last years of his life, in order to renew the bonds of respectful affection and spiritual union which are supposed to have united him to the great pope St Gregory, who ascended the pontifical throne seven years before the death of the Hebridean apostle.[2]

[1] "Et hæc etiam eidem beatæ memoriæ viro a Deo non mediocris est collata gratia qua nomen ejus non tantum per totam nostram Scotiam et omnium totius orbis insularum maximam Britanniam, clare divulgari promeruit, in hac parva et extrema oceani Britannici commoratus (*sic*) insula; sed etiam ad trigonam usque Hispaniam, et Gallias, et ultra Alpes Penninas Italiam sitam pervenire, ipsam quoque Romanam civitatem, quæ caput est omnium civitatum."—ADAMNAN, *in finem*.

[2] According to an account given by Colgan (p. 473), the famous hymn *Altus Prosator* was composed by Columba while the envoys of St Gregory the Great were at Iona, and was sent by him to the Pontiff, who listened to it standing up, in token of respect. We are obliged to acknowledge the same want of proof in the tradition which connects the holy abbot of Iona with the great wonder-worker of the Gauls, St Martin, and which attributes to him a work similar to that of the great archbishop who, in our own days, has undertaken to restore to an honourable condition the profaned grave of his greatest predecessor, by rebuilding the basilica which covers that glorious sepulchre. According to the narrative of O'Donnell (book iii. c. 27), Columba, on his return from Rome, went to Tours to seek the gospel which had lain for a century upon the breast of St Martin, and carried it to Derry, where this relic was exhibited up to the twelfth century. The people of Tours had forgotten the situation of St Martin's grave; and when they begged Columba to find it for them, he consented, only on condition of being allowed to keep for himself everything found in St Martin's tomb, except his bones. The legend adds that Columba left one of his disciples there, the same Mochonna who had followed him first to Iona, and that he afterwards became

His funeral and his grave at Iona.

It was expected that all the population of the neighbouring districts would hasten to Iona and fill the island during the funeral of the great abbot; and this had even been intimated to him before he died. But he had prophesied that the fact would be otherwise, and that his monastic family alone should perform the ceremonies of his burial. And it happened, accordingly, during the three days which were occupied with those rites, that a violent wind made it impossible for any boat to reach the island. Thus this friend and counsellor of princes and nations, this great traveller, this apostle of an entire nation which, during a thousand years, was to honour him as its patron saint, lay solitary upon his bier, in the little church of his island retirement; and his burial was witnessed only by his monks. But his grave, though it was not dug in presence of an enthusiastic crowd, as had been looked for, was not the less visited and surrounded by floods of successive generations, who for more than two hundred years crowded there to venerate the relics of the holy missionary, and to drink the pure waters of his doctrine and example at the fountainhead.

bishop of Tours. This alone is sufficient to disprove the narrative, since at the only period in the life of Columba at which this journey could have taken place, the bishop of Tours was St Gregory the historian, whose predecessor and successor are well known. Let us remark, at the same time, the curious traditional ties between the Church of Tours and that of Ireland, which lasted for several centuries. St Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, is supposed to have been the grand-nephew of St Martin, and to have been encouraged by him in his mission.

The remains of Columba rested here in peace up to the ninth century, until the moment when Iona, like all the British isles, fell a prey to the ravages of the Danes. These cruel and insatiable pirates seem to have been attracted again and again by the wealth of the offerings that were lavished upon the tomb of the apostle of Caledonia. They burnt the monastery for the first time in 801; again in 805, when it contained only so small a number as sixty-four monks; and finally, a third time, in 877. To save from their rapacity a treasure which no pious liberality could replace, the body of St Columba was carried to Ireland. And it is the unvarying tradition of Irish annals that it was deposited finally at Down, in an episcopal monastery not far from the western shore of the island, between the great Monastery of Bangor on the north, from which came Columbanus of Luxeuil, and Dublin, the future capital of Ireland, to the south. There already lay the relics of Patrick and of Bridget; and thus was verified one of the prophecies in Irish verse attributed to Columba, in which he says—

Removal of his remains to Down, in Ireland, where they were laid by those of Patrick and of Bridget.

> "They shall bury me first at Iona;
> But, by the will of the living God,
> It is at Dun that I shall rest in my grave,
> With Patrick and with Bridget the immaculate.
> Three bodies in one grave."[1]

[1] See Reeves, pp. lxxix. 313, 317, 462; compare Colgan, p. 446. These three bodies were found at Down in 1185, after the disasters of

The three names have remained since that time inseparably united in the dauntless heart and fervent tenacious memory of the Irish people. It is to Columba that the oppressed and impoverished Irish seem to have appealed with the greatest confidence in the first English conquest in the twelfth century. The conquerors themselves feared him, not without reason, for they had learned to know his vengeance. John de Courcy, a warlike Anglo-Norman baron, he who was called the Conqueror (*Conquestor*) of Ulster, as William of Normandy of England, carried always with him the volume of Columba's prophecies;[1] and when the bodies of the three saints were found in his new possessions in 1180, he prayed the Holy See to celebrate their translation by the appointment of a solemn festival. Richard Strongbow, the famous Earl of Pembroke, who had been the first chief of the invasion, died of an ulcer in the foot which had been inflicted upon him, according to the Irish narrative, at the prayer of St Bridget, St Columba, and other saints, whose churches he had destroyed. He himself said, when at the point of death, that he saw the sweet and noble Bridget lift her arm to pierce

Columba feared by the Anglo-Norman barons.

the first English conquest, and again united in one tomb by the bishop Malachi, and by John de Courcy, one of the great Anglo-Norman barons, conqueror (*conquestor*, according to the office) of Ulster. A special holiday was instituted by the Holy See in memory of this translation. The office for this festival, printed first at Paris in 1620, has been given by Colgan at the beginning of his precious work, *Trias Thaumaturga*.

[1] KELLY, note to LYNCH, *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. i. p. 386.

him to the heart. Hugh de Lacy, another Anglo-Norman chief of great lineage, perished at Durrow, "by the vengeance of Columb-cille," says a chronicler, while he was engaged in building a castle to the injury of the abbey which Columba had founded, and loved so much.[1] A century after, this *vengeance* was still popularly dreaded; and some English pirates, who had pillaged his church in the island of Inchcolm, having sunk like lead in sight of land, their countrymen said that he should be called, not St Columba, but St *Quhalme*[2]—that is to say, the saint of Sudden Death.

A nation has special need to believe in these vengeances of God, always so tardy and infrequent, and which, in Ireland, above all, have scarcely sufficed to light with a fugitive gleam the long night of the conquest, with all its iniquities and crimes. Happy are the people among whom the everlasting justice of the appeal against falsehood and evil is placed under the shadow of God and the saints; and blessed also the saints who have left to posterity the memory of their indignation against all injustice.

As long as the body of Columba remained in his island grave, Iona, consecrated henceforward by the life and death of so great a Christian, continued to be the most venerated sanctuary of the

[1] O'Donovan's *Four Masters*, vol. i. pp. 25, 75.

[2] *Quhalme* in Anglo-Saxon meant sudden death, from whence the modern English word *qualm*.

Celts. For two centuries she was the nursery of bishops, the centre of education, the asylum of religious knowledge, the point of union among the British isles, the capital and necropolis of the Celtic race. Seventy kings or princes were buried there at the feet of Columba, faithful to a kind of traditional law, the recollection of which has been consecrated by Shakespeare.[1] During these two centuries, she retained an uncontested supremacy over all the monasteries and churches of Caledonia, as over those of half Ireland;[2] and we shall hereafter see how she disputed with the Roman missionaries the authority over the Anglo-Saxons of the north. Later still, if we are permitted to follow this narrative so far, at the end of the eleventh century, we shall see her ruins raised up and restored to monastic life by one of the most noble and touching heroines of Scotland and Christendom, the holy Queen Margaret, the gentle and noble exile, so beautiful, so wise, so magnanimous and beloved, who used her influence over Malcolm her husband only for the regeneration of the Church in his

[1] "Rosse. Where is Duncan's body?
Macduff. Carried to Colmes-Kill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones."
Shakespeare, *Macbeth*.

[2] "Plurima exinde monasteria per discipulos ejus in Britannia et in Hibernia propagata sunt: in quibus omnibus idem monasterium insulanum, in quo ipse requiescit corpore, principatum tenet."—Bede, iii. 4. "Cujus monasterium in cunctis pene septentrionalium Scotorum et omnium Pictorum monasteriis non parvo tempore arcem tenebat regendisque eorum populis præerat."—*Ibid.*, iii. 3.

kingdom, and whose dear memory is worthy of being associated in the heart of the Scottish people with that of Columba, since she obtained by his intercession that grace of maternity which has made her the origin of the dynasty which still reigns over the British Isles.[1]

Let us here reconsider the privilege which gave to the abbots of Iona a sort of jurisdiction over the bishops of the neighbouring districts[2]—a privilege unique, and which would even appear fabulous, if it were not attested by two of the most trustworthy historians of the time, the Venerable Bede and Notker of St Gall. In order to explain this strange anomaly it must be understood that in Celtic countries, especially in Ireland and in Scotland, ecclesiastical

[1] Orderic Vital, l. viii. 702; Fordun, *Scotichronicon*, v. 37. On the summit of the picturesque rock upon which Edinburgh Castle is built, may still be seen the chapel dedicated to St Margaret, recently restored by order of the Queen. She is the Christian Minerva of that Acropolis of the North.

[2] "Habet insula rectorem semper abbatem presbyterum, cujus jura omnis provincia, et ipsi etiam episcopi, ordine inusitato, debeant esse subjecti."—Bede, l. iii. 4. Compare *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ad an. 565, ed. Giles. "In Scotia insula Hibernia depositio sancti Columbæ, cognomento apud suos Columb-Killi, eo quod multarum cellarum, id est monasteriorum vel ecclesiarum institutor, fundator et rector exstiterit: adeo ut abbas monasterii, cui novissime præfuit et ubi requiescit, contra morem ecclesiasticum primus omnium Hibernensium habeatur episcoporum."—Notker Balbulus, *Martyrologium*. Mabillon quotes the charter of the Irish Abbey of Honau in Germany, where the signature of the abbot precedes those of seven bishops, all bearing Celtic names.—*Annales Benedictini*, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 70. Who were the bishops subject to the primacy of Iona? If Colgan is to be believed—in *Præf.*, *Triad. Thaum.*, "prærogativo forte jure pari legimus concessum, quod ejus abbas primatum et præcedentiam habeat ante omnes Scotorum episcopos"—it must be supposed that all the bishops of Ireland and Scotland were under its authority.

organisation rested, in the first place, solely upon conventual life. Dioceses and parishes were regularly constituted only in the twelfth century. Bishops, it is true, existed from the beginning, but either without any clearly fixed territorial jurisdiction, or incorporated as a necessary but subordinate part of the ecclesiastical machinery with the great monastic bodies; and such was specially the case in Ireland. It is for this reason that the bishops of the Celtic Church, as has been often remarked, are so much overshadowed not only by great founders and superiors of monasteries, such as Columba, but even by simple abbots.[1] Nevertheless, it is evident that during the life of Columba, far from assuming any superiority whatever over the bishops who were his contemporaries, he showed them the utmost respect, even to such a point that he would not celebrate mass in the presence of a bishop who had come, humbly disguised as a simple convert, to visit the community of Iona.[2] At the same time the abbots scrupulously abstained from all usurpation of the rank, privileges, or functions reserved to bishops, to whom they had recourse for all the or-

[1] See the curious incident narrated by Adamnan (i. 36), where a bishop hesitated to confer the priesthood on Aïdus the Black before having the authority of the abbot of Tiree, an insular *cella* dependant upon Iona.—"Episcopus non ausus est super caput ejus manum imponere, nisi prius presbyter Findchanus . . . suam capiti ejus pro confirmatione imponeret dextram."

[2] "Quidam proselytus ad sanctum venit qui se in quantum potuit occultabat humiliter, ut nullus sciret quod esset espiscopus."—ADAMNAN, i. 44.

dinations celebrated in the monasteries.[1] But as most of the bishops had been educated in monastic schools, they retained an affectionate veneration for their cradle, which, in regard to Iona especially, from which we shall see so many bishops issue, might have translated itself into a sort of prolonged submission to the conventual authority of their former superior. Five centuries later the bishops who came from the great French abbeys of Cluny and Citeaux took pleasure in professing the same filial subordination to their monastic birthplace.

The uncontested primacy of Iona over the bishops who had there professed religion, or who came there to be consecrated after their election, may be besides explained by the influence exercised by Columba over both clergy and people of the districts evangelised by him—an influence which was only increased by his death.

Was Columba the author of a special rule?

Did the great abbot of Iona, like his namesake of Luxeuil, leave to his disciples a monastic rule of his own, distinct from that of other Celtic monasteries? This has been often asserted, but without positive proof—and in any case no authentic text of such a document exists.[2] That which bears the

[1] "Accito episcopo . . . apud supradictum Findchanum presbyter ordinatus est."—ADAMNAN, i. 36.

[2] Colgan (*Trias Thaum.*, p. 471) and Hœften (*Disquisitiones Monasticæ*, l. i. tr. 8, p. 84) had in their hands the text of a rule attributed to Columba, and reprinted by Reeves in 1850, but both have acknowledged that it would be applicable only to anchorites.—O'CURRY, *Lectures*, pp. 374, 612. The only proof of the existence of a cenobitical rule originated by Columba, is the mention made of it by Bede in the address of Wilfrid

name of the *Rule of Columb-kill*, and which has been sometimes attributed to him, has no reference in any way to the cenobites of Iona, and is only applicable to hermits or recluses, who lived perhaps under his authority, but isolated, and who were always very numerous in Ireland.[1]

A conscientious and attentive examination of all the monastic peculiarities which can be discovered in his biography[2] reveals absolutely nothing in respect to observances or obligations different from the rules borrowed by all the religious communities of the sixth century from the traditions of the Fathers of the Desert. Such an examination brings out distinctly, in the first place, the necessity for a vow[3] or solemn profession to prove the final admission of the monk into the community after a probation more

at the celebrated conference of Whitby between the Benedictines and the Celtic monks, which will be discussed hereafter: "De Patre Vestro Columba et sequacibus ejus, quorum sanctitatem vos imitari et *Regulam* ac præcepta cœlestibus signis confirmata." The word *Regula*, however, which occurs so often in the lives of the Irish saints, can scarcely mean anything more than *observance, discipline;* each considerable saint had his own. Reeves has proved that the *Ordo monasticus*, attributed to Columba by the last edition of Holsteinus, does not go farther back than to the twelfth century.

[1] The recluses or anchorites, who passed their life in a little cell containing an altar, at which to say mass, sometimes solitary, sometimes attached to their church (like that of Marianus Scotus at Fulda), existed for a very long time in Ireland. Sir Henry Piers has proved the existence of one of these recluses, and described his cell in the county of Westmeath in 1682.—REEVES, *Memory of the Church of St Duilech*, 1859.

[2] See the Appendix N to the volume of Reeves, entitled *Institutio Hyensis*. It is an excellent epitome of all the monastic customs of the period.

[3] "Votum monachiale voverunt . . . votum monachicum devotus vovit."—ADAMNAN, i. 31, ii. 39.

or less prolonged; and, in the second place, the absolute conformity of the monastic life of Columba and his monks to the precepts and rites of the Catholic Church in all ages. Authorities unquestionable and unquestioned demonstrate the existence of auricular confession, the invocation of saints, the universal faith in their protection and intervention in temporal affairs, the celebration of the mass, the real presence in the Eucharist, ecclesiastical celibacy, fasts and abstinences, prayer for the dead, the sign of the cross, and, above all, the assiduous and profound study of the Holy Scriptures.[1] Thus the assumption made by certain writers of having found in the Celtic Church some sort of primitive Christianity not Catholic, crumbles to the dust; and the ridiculous but inveterate prejudice which accuses our fathers of having ignored or interdicted the study of the Bible is once again proved to be without foundation.

As to the customs peculiar to the Irish Church, and which were afterwards the cause of so many tedious struggles with the Roman and Anglo-

[1] To prove our assertion we indicate several passages from Adamnan:

Auricular Confession is expressly pointed out in the history of Libranus, ii. 39.

The Invocation of Saints at each page. Columba is even invoked during his life. Their protection and intervention in temporal affairs, ii. 5, 15, 39, 40.

The celebration of festivals and offices in their honour.

The *real presence*—All the elements of the Eucharist. "A sancto jussus Christi corpus conficere. . . . Eucharistiæ mysteria celebrare pro anima sancta."—COLGAN, *Vita Prima*, c. 8; ADAMNAN, iii. 12.

Solemn mass on Sunday, iii. 12; on other days, i. 40.

Saxon missionaries, no trace of them is to be discovered in the acts or words of Columba. There is no mention of the tiresome disputes about the tonsure, or even of the irregular celebration of Easter, except perhaps in a prophecy vaguely made by him on the occasion of a visit to Clonmacnoise, upon the discords which this difference of opinion in respect to Easter would one day excite in the Scotic Church.[1]

Order founded by Columba.

His successors.

If Columba made no rule calculated, like that of St Benedict, to last for centuries, he nevertheless left to his disciples a spirit of life, of union, and of discipline, which was sufficient to maintain in one great body, for several centuries after his death, not only the monks of Iona, but the numerous communities which had gathered round them. This monastic body bore a noble name; it was long called the Order of the Fair Company,[2] and still longer the Family of Columb-kill. It was governed by abbots, who succeeded Columba as superiors of the community of Iona. These abbots proved themselves worthy of, and obtained from Bede, one of the most competent of judges, who began to write a hundred years after the death of Columba, a tribute of admiration without reserve, and even more striking than that which he gave to their founder:—"Whatever he may have been," said the Venerable Bede, with a certain shadow of

[1] Adamnan, i. 3.

[2] "Cujus ordo dicebatur pulchræ societatis."—*Vita Sancti Kierani*, apud Hœften, *op. cit.*, pp. 61, 64.

Anglo-Saxon suspicion in respect to Celtic virtue and sanctity, "it is undeniable that he has left successors illustrious by the purity of their life, their great love of God, and their zeal for monastic order: and, although separated from us as to the observance of Easter, which is caused by their distance from all the rest of the world, ardently and closely devoted to the observance of those laws of piety and chastity which they have learned in the Old and New Testaments."[1] These praises are justified by the great number of saints who have issued from the spiritual lineage of Columba;[2] but they should be specially applied to his successors in the abbatial see of Iona, and, in the first place, to his first successor, whom he had himself pointed out, the holy and amiable Baithen, who was so worthy to be his lieutenant and friend, and could so well replace him. He survived Columba only three years, and died on the anniversary of his master's death.[3] The cruel sufferings of his last

[1] "Qualiscunque fuerit ipse, nos hoc de illo certum tenemus, quia reliquit successores magna continentia et divino amore regulæque monasticæ insignes . . . pietatis et castitatis opera diligenter observantes."—Bede, iii. 4.

[2] The number may be seen in Colgan, who names as many as a hundred and twelve, the most part of whom are commemorated in the Irish martyrologies.

[3] During his short abbacy, it is apparent that all was not unanimous adhesion and enthusiasm. A certain Bevan, described as a persecutor of the Churches, once sent to ask the remains of the meal which the monks of Iona had just eaten, in order to turn them into derision. "Nec ob aliud hoc postulabat, nisi ut causam blasphemiæ ac despectionis fratrum inveniret." Baithen sent to him what remained of the milk which had made the repast of the brethren. After he had drunk it, the scoffer was

illness did not prevent him from praying, writing, and teaching to his last hour. Baithen was, as has been said, the cousin-german of Columba, and almost all the abbots of Iona who succeeded him were of the same race.

Preponderance of the clan in the constitution of Celtic monachism.

The family spirit, or, to speak more truly, the clan spirit, always so powerful and active in Ireland, and which was so striking a feature in the character of Columba, had become a predominating influence in the monastic life of the Celtic Church. It was not precisely hereditary succession, since marriage was absolutely unknown among the regular clergy: but great influence was given to blood in the election of abbots, as in that of princes or military leaders. The nephew or cousin of the founder or superior of a monastery seemed the candidate pointed out by nature for the vacant dignity. Special reasons were necessary for breaking through this rule. Thus it is apparent that the eleven first abbots of Iona after Columba, proceeded, with the exception of one individual, from the same stock as himself, from the race of Tyrconnel, and were all descended from the same son of Niall of the Nine Hostages, the famous king of all Ireland.[1] Every great monastery became thus the centre and appanage of a family, or, to speak more exactly, of a clan, and was alike the school and the asylum of all the

seized with such suffering, that he was converted, and died confessing his repentance.—Act. SS. Bolland., vol. ii. June, p. 238.

[1] See the genealogical table given by Dr Reeves, at page 313 of his edition of Adamnan.

founder's kindred. At a later period a kind of succession, purely laic and hereditary, developed itself by the side of the spiritual posterity, and was invested with the possession of most of the monastic domains. These two lines of descendants, simultaneous but distinct, from the principal monastic founders, are distinguished in the historical genealogies of Ireland under the names of *ecclesiastica progenies* and of *plebilis progenies*.[1] After the ninth century, in consequence of the relaxation of discipline, the invasion of married clerks, and the increasing value of land, the line of spiritual descent confounded itself more and more with that of natural inheritance, and there arose a crowd of abbots purely lay and hereditary, as proud of being the collateral descendants of a holy founder, as they were happy to possess the vast domains with which the foundation had been gradually enriched. This fatal abuse made its appearance also in France and Germany, but was less inveterate than in Ireland, where it still existed in the time of St Bernard; and in Scotland, where it lasted even after the Reformation.

It was never thus at Iona, where the abbatical succession was always perfectly regular and uninterrupted up to the invasions and devastations of the Danes at the commencement of the eighth century. From the time of those invasions the abbots

[1] Dr Reeves has thoroughly examined this curious question in a special paper, *On the Ancient Abbatial Succession in Ireland*, ap. Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, vol. vii., 1857.

of Iona began to occupy an inferior position. The radiant centre from which Christian civilisation had shone upon the British Isles grew dim.[1] The headquarters of the communities united under the title of the *Family* or *Order of Columb-kill*, were transferred from Iona to one of the other foundations of the saint at Kells, in the centre of Ireland, where a successor of Columba, superior-general of the order, titulary abbot of Iona, Armagh, or some other great Irish monastery, and bearing the distinctive title of *Coarb*, resided for three centuries more.[2]

We have lingered too long over the great and touching figure of the saint whose life we have just recorded. And it now remains to us to throw a rapid glance at the influence which he exercised on all around him, and even upon posterity.

This influence is especially evident in the Irish Church, which seems to have been entirely swayed Posthumous influence of

[1] Magnus, king of Norway, after having conquered the Hebrides, visited Iona in 1097, and annexed the islands to the bishopric of Sodor and Man (*Sodorensis*), under the metropolitan of Drontheim, which destroyed the ancient ecclesiastical tradition in the island. In 1203, an abbot of Iona, who came from Ireland, and belonged to the family of Columba, is mentioned for the last time. In 1214, there is mention of a priory of the order of Cluny, the origin of which is unknown.—LANIGAN, vol. iv. p. 347; COSMO INNES, p. 110. The temporal sovereignty fell to the famous *Lords of the Isles*, immortalised by Walter Scott, and whose tombs may still be seen there.—See Appendix A.

[2] See the detailed chronology of the forty-nine successors of Columba, and of their arts and laws, from 597 to 1219, in the *Chronicon Hyense* of Reeves, from page 359. These Coarbs have been strangely confounded by Ussher, Ware, Lanigan, and other writers, with the *chorepiscopi* of the continent.

Columba upon the Irish Church.

by his spirit, his successors, and his disciples, during the time which is looked upon as the Golden Age in its history, and which extends up to the period of the Danish invasions, at the end of the eighth century. During all this time the Irish Church, which continued, as from its origin, entirely monastic, seems to have been governed by the re-

Lex Columbcille.

collections or institutions of Columba. The words *Lex Columbcille* are found on many pages of its confused annals, and indicate sometimes the mass of traditions preserved by its monasteries, sometimes the tributes which the kings levied for the defence of the Church and country, while carrying through all Ireland the shrine which contained his relics.[1] The continued influence of the great abbot of Iona was so marked, even in temporal affairs, that more than two centuries after his death, in 817, the monks of his order, *Congregatio Columbcille*, went solemnly to Tara, the ancient capital of Druidical Ireland, to excommunicate there the supreme monarch of the island, who had assassinated a prince of the family of their holy chief.[2]

Great intellectual development of the Irish monasteries.

It has been said, and cannot be sufficiently repeated, that Ireland was then regarded by all Christian Europe as the principal centre of knowledge and piety. In the shelter of its numberless monasteries a crowd of missionaries, doctors, and preachers were educated for the service of the Church and

[1] This occurred in 753, 757, and 778.

[2] *Annals of Ulster*, ann. 817.

the propagation of the faith in all Christian countries. A vast and continual development of literary and religious effort [1] is there apparent, superior to anything that could be seen in any other country of Europe. Certain arts—those of architecture, carving, metallurgy, as applied to the decoration of churches—were successfully cultivated, without speaking of music, which continued to flourish both among the learned and among the people. The classic languages—not only Latin, but Greek—were cultivated, spoken, and written with a sort of passionate pedantry, which shows at least how powerful was the sway of intellectual influences over these ardent souls. Their mania for Greek was even carried so far that they wrote the Latin of the church books in Hellenic characters.[2] And in Ireland more than anywhere else, each monastery was a school, and each school a workshop of transcription, from which day by day issued new copies of the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers of the primitive Church—copies which were dispersed through all Europe, and which are still to be found in Continental libraries. They may easily be recognised by the original and elegant character of their Irish writing, as also by the use of the

[1] "Scripturarum tam liberalium quam ecclesiasticarum."

[2] REEVES's *Adamnan*, pp. 158, 354. In a MS. life of St Brendan this curious passage occurs: "Habebat . . . missalem librum scriptum Græcis litteris. . . . Et positus est ille liber super altare. . . . Illico jam litteras Græcas scivit sanctus Brendanus, sicuti Latinas quas didicit ab infantia. Et cœpit missam cantare."

alphabet common to all the Celtic races, and afterwards employed by the Anglo-Saxons, but to which in our day the Irish alone have remained faithful.

Calligraphy in imitation of Columba.

Columba, as has been seen, had given an example of this unwearied labour to the monastic scribes; his example was continually followed in the Irish cloisters, where the monks did not entirely limit themselves to the transcription of Holy Scripture, but reproduced also Greek and Latin authors, sometimes in Celtic character, with gloss and commentary in Irish, like that Horace which modern learning has discovered in the library of Berne.[1] These marvellous manuscripts, illuminated with incomparable ability and patience by the monastic family of Columba, excited, five hundred years later, the declamatory enthusiasm of a great enemy of Ireland, the Anglo-Norman historian, Gerald de Barry; and they still attract the attention of archæologists and philologists of the highest fame.[2]

Historic annals.

Exact annals of the events of the time were also made out in all the monasteries. These annals re-

[1] Orelli, in his edition of Horace, says that this Codex of Berne, with its Irish gloss, is of the eighth or ninth century: "*Scotice scriptus*, antiquissimus omnium quotquot adhuc innotuerunt."

[2] "Hæc equidem quanto frequentius et diligentius intueor, semper quasi novis obstupeo, semperque magis et magis admiranda conspicio."—Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topogr. Hiber.*, ii. c. 38. Most of these admired and quoted MSS. in Continental or Anglo-Saxon libraries, are of Irish origin, as has been proved by Zeuss, Keller, and Reeves. The MSS. used by the celebrated philologist Zeuss in the composition of his *Grammatica Celtica* (Lipsiæ, 1853) contain Irish glosses upon the Latin text of Priscian, at St Gall, on St Paul's epistles, at Wurzburg, on the commentary of St Columbanus upon the Psalms, which has been brought from Bobbio to Milan, and on Bede, brought from Reichenau to Carlsruhe.

placed the chronicles of the bards; and so far as they have been preserved, and already published or about to be so, they now form the principal source of Irish history.[1] Ecclesiastical records have naturally a greater place in them than civil history. They celebrate especially the memory of the saints, who have always been so numerous in the Irish Church, where each of the great communities can count a circle of holy men, issued from its bosom or attached to its confraternity. Under the name of *sanctilogy* or *festilogy* (for martyrs were too little known in Ireland to justify the usual term of martyrology), this circle of biographies was the spiritual reading of the monks, and the familiar instruction of the surrounding people. Several of these *festilogies* are in verse, one of which, the most famous of all, is attributed to Angus, called the *Culdee*, a simple brother, miller of the Monastery of Tallach.[2] In this the principal saints of other countries find a place along with three hundred and sixty-five Irish saints, one for each day of the year, who are all celebrated with that pious and patriotic enthusiasm, at once poetical and moral, which burns so naturally in every Irish heart.

Angus, the Culdee.

[1] These precious collections were continued by the more recent Orders after the English conquest, and even after the Reformation, up to the seventeenth century. See especially the valuable collection entitled *Annals of the Four Masters*, that is to say, of the four Franciscans of Donegal, which come down to 1634.

[2] See the analysis made of it by O'Curry, *Lectures*, &c., pp. 364, 371, and, after him, M. de la Villemarqué, in his *Poésie des Cloîtres Celtiques*.

The Culdees.

The name of Culdee leads us to point out in passing the absurd and widespread error which has made the Culdees be looked upon as a kind of monkish order, married and indigenous to the soil, which existed before the introduction of Christianity into Ireland and Scotland by the Roman missionaries, and of whom the great abbot of Iona was the founder or chief. This opinion, propagated by learned Anglicans, and blindly copied by various French writers, is now universally acknowledged as false by sincere and competent judges.[1] The Cul-

[1] According to Dr Reeves, the name of *Culdee* or *Ceïle Dei*, answering to the Latin term *Servus Dei*, appeared for the first time in authentic history with the name of this Angus, who lived in 780. It was afterwards applied to the general body of monks, that is to say, to all the clerks living under a monastic rule in Ireland and Scotland. According to the lamented O'Curry, the Culdees were nothing more than ecclesiastics or laymen, attached to the monasteries, and whose first founder was a St Malruain, who died in 787 or 792. This information, which the author has derived from the two princes of Irish erudition, agrees perfectly with the conclusions of Dr Lanigan in his very learned and impartial ecclesiastical history of Ireland, vol. iv. p. 295-300; as also with those of the new Bollandists, vol. viii. of October, p. 86, *Disquisitio in Culdeos*, ap. Acta S. Reguli. According to the worthy continuators of the *Acta Sanctorum*, the Culdees were not monks, but secular brothers, or rather canons, and appeared at soonest in the year 800. At the same time our learned contemporaries remit to the ninth century that translation of the relics of the apostle St Andrew, who became the patron saint of Scotland in the middle ages, which the legends have attributed to the fourth or sixth. This translation, made by a bishop named Regulus (Rule), occasioned the foundation of the episcopal see and town of St Andrews on the east coast of Scotland, in the county of Fife, which was made metropolis of the kingdom in 1472, and possesses a university, which dates from 1411. Very fine ruins of the churches destroyed by the Reformers in 1559 are still to be seen there. Since the preceding note was written, a new publication, by Dr Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Islands as they appear in History, with an appendix of Evidences*, Dublin, 1864, has summed up and ended all controversy upon this long-disputed question, and given the last blow to the chimeras of sectarian erudition.

dees, a sort of third order, attached to the regular monasteries, appeared in Ireland, as elsewhere, only in the ninth century, and had never anything more than a trifling connection with the Columban communities.[1]

Missionary efforts of the Irish monks out of Ireland.

Still more striking than the intellectual development of which the Irish monasteries were at this period the centre, is the prodigious activity displayed by the Irish monks in extending and multiplying themselves over all the countries of Europe —here to create new schools and sanctuaries among nations already evangelised—there to carry the light of the Gospel, at peril of their lives, to the countries that were still pagan. We should run the risk of forestalling our future task if we did not resist the temptations of the subject, which would lead us to go faster than time, and to follow those armies of brave and untiring Celts, always adventurous and often heroic, into the regions where we shall perhaps one day find them again. Let us content ourselves with a simple list, which has a certain eloquence even in the dryness of its figures. Here is the number, probably very incomplete, given by an ancient writer, of the monasteries founded out of Ireland by Irish monks, led far from their country by the love of souls, and, no doubt, a little also by that love of travel which has always been one of their special distinctions :—

[1] Reeves's *Adamnan*, p. 368.

Thirteen in Scotland,
Twelve in England,
Seven in France,
Twelve in Armorica,
Seven in Lorraine,
Ten in Alsatia,
Sixteen in Bavaria,
Fifteen in Rhetia, Helvetia, and Allemania ;

without counting many in Thuringia and upon the left bank of the Lower Rhine ; and, finally, six in Italy.

And that it may be fully apparent how great was the zeal and virtue of which those monastic colonies were at once the product and the centre, let us place by its side an analogous list of saints of Irish origin, whom the gratitude of nations converted, edified, and civilised by them, have placed upon their altars as patrons and founders of those churches whose foundations they watered with their blood :—

A hundred and fifty (of whom thirty-six were martyrs) in Germany,
Forty-five (of whom six were martyrs) in Gaul,
Thirty in Belgium,
Thirteen in Italy,
Eight, all martyrs, in Norway and Iceland.[1]

In the after part of this narrative we shall meet many of the most illustrious, especially in Germany. Let us confine ourselves here to pointing

[1] Stephen White, *Apologia*, in Haverty's *History of Ireland*.

out, among the thirteen Irish saints honoured with public veneration in Italy, him who is still invoked at the extremity of the peninsula as the patron of Tarento under the name of San Cataldo.

San Cataldo, bishop of Tarento.

His name in Ireland was Cathal, and before he left his country to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and to become a bishop at Tarento, he had presided over the great monastic school of Lismore,[1] in the south of Ireland.[2] Thanks to his zeal and knowledge, this school had become a sort of university, to which he attracted an immense crowd of students, not only Irish, but foreigners, from Wales, England, France, and even from Germany. When their education was concluded, a portion of them remained to increase the already numerous communities in the holy and lettered city of Lismore; the others carried back with them to their different countries a recollection of the advantages which they owed to Ireland and her monks.[3] For it is

[1] See his acts, in COLGAN, p. 542-562, and the BOLLANDISTS, vol. ii. May, p. 569-578. Lanigan (vol. iii. p. 121-128) quotes a life of this saint in Latin verse by Bonaventura Moroni. His father, St Donatus, is supposed to have been bishop of Lecce, in the same province as Tarento.

[2] See the legend of the founder of Lismore, Book VIII. chap. iii.

[3] "Egregia jam et sancta civitas est Lismor, cujus dimidium est asylum, in quo nulla mulier audet intrare, sed plenum est cellis et monasteriis sanctis: et multitudo virorum sanctorum semper illi manet. Viri enim religiosi ex omni parte Hiberniæ, et non solum ex Anglia et Britannia confluunt ad eam, volentes ibi migrare ad Christum."—*Act. Sanct. Bolland.*, vol. iii. May, p. 388. "Ad eam brevi excellentiam pervenit, ut ad ipsum audiendum Galli, Angli, Scoti, Teutones aliique finitarum regionum quam plurimi Lesmorium conveniunt."—*Officium S. Cataldi*, ap. LANIGAN, *loco cit.* This monastic town of Lismore, the seat of a bishopric since united with that of Waterford, must not be identified with another bishopric called Lismore, situated in an island of the He-

Crowd of foreign students, especially of Anglo-Saxons, in the Irish cloisters.

important to prove that, while Ireland sent forth her sons into all the regions of the then known world, numberless strangers hastened there to seat themselves at the feet of her doctors, and to find in that vast centre of faith and knowledge all the remnants of ancient civilisation which her insular position had permitted her to save from the flood of barbarous invasions.

The monasteries which gradually covered the soil of Ireland were thus the hostelries of a foreign emigration. Unlike the ancient Druidical colleges, they were open to all. The poor and the rich, the slave as well as the freeman, the child and the old man, had free access and paid nothing. It was not, then, only to the natives of Ireland that the Irish monasteries, occupied and ruled by the sons of Columba, confined the benefits of knowledge and of literary and religious education. They opened their door with admirable generosity to strangers from every country and of every condition; above all, to those who came from the neighbouring island, England, some to end their lives in an Irish cloister, some to search from house to house for books, and masters capable of explaining those books. The Irish monks received with kindness guests so greedy of instruction, and gave them both books and masters, the food of the body and

bridean archipelago. The Irish Lismore is now specially remarkable for a fine castle of the Duke of Devonshire on the picturesque banks of the Blackwater.

the food of the soul, without demanding any recompence.[1] The Anglo-Saxons, who were afterwards to repay this teaching with ingratitude so cruel, were of all nations the one which derived most profit from it. From the seventh to the eleventh century English students flocked into Ireland, and for four hundred years the monastic schools of the island maintained the great reputation which brought so many successive generations to dip deeply there into the living waters of knowledge and of faith.

Terrible confusions of existence in Ireland.

This devotion to knowledge and generous munificence towards strangers, this studious and intellectual life, nourished into being by the sheltering warmth of faith, shone with all the more brightness amid the horrible confusion and bloody disasters which signalise, in so far as concerned temporal affairs, the *Golden Age* of ecclesiastical history in Ireland, even before the sanguinary invasions of the Danes at the end of the eighth century. It has been said with justice that war and religion have been in all ages the two great passions of Ireland. But it must be allowed that war seems

[1] "Erant ibidem multi nobilium simul et mediocrium de gente Anglorum qui . . . relicta patria, vel divinæ lectionis, vel continentioris vitæ gratia illo secesserant. Et quidam mox se monasticæ conversationi fideliter mancipaverunt, alii magis circumeundo per cellas magistrorum lectioni operam dare gaudebant, quod omnes Scoti libentissime suscipientes victum eis quotidianum sine pretio, aliis quoque ad legendum et magisterium gratuitum præbere curabant."—Bede, iii. 27, ad ann. 664. There still existed in Armagh, in 1092, a locality called *Trien-Saxon*, inhabited by Anglo-Saxon students.—Colgan, *Trias Thaum.*, p. 300; compare Lanigan, iii. 490, 493.

almost always to have carried the day over religion, and that religion did not prevent war from degenerating too often into massacres and assassinations. It is true that after the eighth century there are fewer kings murdered by their successors than in the period between St Patrick and St Columba; it is true that three or four of these kings lived long enough to have the time to go and expiate their sins as monks at Armagh or Iona.[1] But it is not less true that the annals of the monastic family of Columba present to us at each line with mournful laconism a spectacle which absolutely contradicts the flattering pictures which have been drawn of the peace which Ireland should have enjoyed. Almost every year, such words as the following are repeated with cruel brevity:—

Bellum.
Bellum lacrymabile.
Bellum magnum.
Vastatio.
Spoliatio.

[1] These kings are, according to the Annals of Tigherneach—

Comgall, who died a monk at Lotra (?—perhaps Lure) in 710.
Feailhbeartach, who abdicated in 729, and was a monk for thirty years at Armagh.
Domhnall, or Donald III., who died at Iona in 764.
Niall Fiosach, who died at Iona in 777, after having been a monk for seven years.

The principal kings or monarchs of the island are alone mentioned here. As for the provincial kings, or chieftains of clans, who took the monastic habit, it would be impossible to count them. Many are named in the *Cambrensis Eversus* of Lynch, c. 30.

Violatio.
Obsessio.
Strages Magna.
Jugulatio.

And above all, *Jugulatio.* It is the word which returns oftenest, and in which seems to be summed up the destiny of those unhappy princes and people.

Such an enumeration should give rise to the reflection, what this wild tree of Celtic nature would have been without the monastic graft. We can thus perceive with what ferocious natures Columba and his disciples had to do. If, notwithstanding the preaching of the monks, a state of affairs so barbarous continued to exist, what might it have been had the Gospel never been preached to those savages, and if the monks had not been in the midst of them like a permanent incarnation of the Spirit of God?

The monks were at the same time neither less inactive nor more spared than the women, who fought and perished in the wars precisely like the men, up to the time when the most illustrious of Columba's successors delivered them from that terrible bondage. A single incident drawn from the sanguinary chaos of the period will suffice at once to paint the always atrocious habits of those Celtic Christians, and the always beneficent influence of monastic authority. A hundred years after the death of Columba, his biographer and ninth succes-

Adamnan, the ninth successor of Columba, and his *Law of the Innocents.*

sor, Adamnan, was crossing a plain, carrying his old mother on his back, when they saw two bands fighting, and in the midst of the battle a woman dragging another woman after her, whose breast she had pierced with an iron hook. At this horrible spectacle the abbot's mother seated herself on the ground, and said to him, "I will not leave this spot till thou hast promised me to have women exempted for ever from this horror, and from every battle and expedition." He gave her his word, and he kept it. At the next national assembly of Tara, he proposed and carried a law which is inscribed in the annals of Ireland as the *Law of Adamnan*, or *Law of the Innocents*, and which for ever freed the Irish women from the obligation of military service and all its homicidal consequences.[1]

At the same time, nothing was more common in Ireland than the armed intervention of the monks in civil wars, or in the struggles between different communities. We may be permitted to believe that the spiritual descendants of Columba reckoned among them more than one monk of character as warlike as their great ancestor, and that there were as many monastic actors as victims in these desperate conflicts. Two centuries after

[1] "Lex Adamnani. . . . Adamnanus ad Hiberniam pergit et . . . dedit legem innocentium populis."—*Annales Ultoniæ*, an. 696. Compare PETRIE's *Tara*, pp. 147. REEVES, p. 51, 53, 179. The assembly was composed of forty ecclesiastics and thirty-nine laymen. They also decreed an annual tribute to be collected over all Ireland for the benefit of the abbot of Iona and his successors.

Columba, two hundred monks of his abbey at Durrow perished in a battle with the neighbouring monks of Clonmacnoise; and the old annalists of Ireland speak of a battle which took place in 816, at which eight hundred monks of Ferns were killed. The Irish religious had not given up either the warlike humour or the dauntless courage of their race.

Immortal patriotism of the Irish monks.

Nor is it less certain that the studious fervour and persevering patriotism which were such marked features in the character of Columba remained the inalienable inheritance of his monastic posterity—an inheritance which continued up to the middle ages, to the time of that famous statute of Kilkenny, which is an ineffaceable monument of the ferocious arrogance of the English conquerors, even before the Reformation. This statute, after having denounced every marriage between the two races as an act of high treason, went so far as to exclude all native Irish from the monasteries—from those same monasteries which Irishmen alone had founded and occupied for eight centuries, and where, before and after Columba, they had afforded a generous hospitality to the British fugitives and to the victorious Saxons.

But we must not permit ourselves to linger on the Irish coasts. We shall soon again meet her generous and intrepid sons, always the first in the field, and the most ready to expose themselves to danger, among the apostles and propagators of

monastic institutions, upon the banks of the Scheldt, the Rhine, and the Danube, where also they were eclipsed and surpassed by the Anglo-Saxons, but where their names, forgotten in Ireland, still shine with a pure and beneficent light.

Influence of Columba in Scotland.

The influence of Columba, so universal, undeniable, and enduring in his native island, should not have been less so in his adopted country—in that Caledonia which became more and more an Irish or Scotic colony, and thus merited the name of Scotland, which it retained. Notwithstanding, his work has perhaps left fewer authentic traces there. All unite in attributing to him the conversion of the Northern Picts, and the introduction or re-establishment of the faith among the Picts of the South and the Scots of the West. It is also pretty generally agreed to date from his times—even though there is no evidence of their direct subordination to Iona—the great monasteries of Old Melrose,[1] of Abercorn, Tynninghame, and Coldingham, situated between the Forth and the Tweed, and which afterwards became the centres of Christian extension among the Saxons of Northumbria. Further north, but still upon the east coast, the round towers which are still to be seen at Brechin and Abernethy bear witness to their Irish origin, and consequently to the influence of Columba, who was the

Remains of the ancient Caledonian Church.

[1] Old Melrose, which was the cradle of the great and celebrated Cistercian Abbey of Melrose, whose ruins are admired by all travellers and readers of Walter Scott. The site alone now remains.

first and principal Irish missionary in these districts. The same may be said of those primitive and lowly constructions, built with long and large stones laid upon each other, without cement, which are to be found in St Kilda and other Hebridean isles, and also upon certain points of the neighbouring shore, resembling exactly in form the deserted monasteries which are so numerous in the isles of western Ireland.[1] Another relic of the primitive Church is found in the caves, hollowed out or enlarged by the hand of man, in the cliffs or mountains of the interior, inhabited of old, as were the grots of Subiaco and Marmoutier, and as the caves of Meteores in Albania[2] are still, by hermits, or sometimes even by bishops (as St Woloc, St Regulus[3]). Kentigern, the apostle of Strathclyde, appears to us in the legend at the mouth of his episcopal cave, which was hollowed out in the side of a cliff, and where the people looked at him from afar with respectful curiosity, while he studied the direction of the storms at sea, and breathed in with pleasure the first breezes of the spring. Apostleship of St Kentigern.

This bishop, Welsh by birth, has already been

[1] Studied carefully by Lord Dunraven and other members of the learned company called The Irish Archæological and Celtic Society.

[2] Curzon's *Monasteries of the Levant.*

[3] See above, the note of the Bollandists upon the apostolic labours of St Regulus. An *auge* or lavatory in stone is still shown near the ruined church of Strath Deveron, which is called St Woloc's bath, and where mothers came to bathe their sick children. This holy bishop lived in a house built like the first church of Iona. "Pauperculam casam calamis viminibusque contextam."—*Breviarium Aberdonense*, Propr. SS., p. 14.

mentioned in connection with the principality of Wales, where, as we have already seen, he founded an immense monastery during an exile, the cause of which it is impossible to ascertain, but which was the occasion of a relapse into idolatry among his diocesans.[1] The district of Strathclyde or Cumbria, on the west coasts of Britain, from the mouth of the Clyde to that of the Mersey—that is to say, from Glasgow to Liverpool—was occupied by a mingled race of Britons and Scots, whose capital was Al-Cluid, now Dumbarton. A prince called Roderick (Rydderch Haël), whose mother was Irish, and who had been baptised by an Irish monk, hastened, when the authority fell into his hands, to recall Kentigern, who returned, bringing with him a hive of Welsh monks, and established definitively the seat of his apostleship at Glasgow, where Ninian had preceded him nearly a century before without leaving any lasting traces of his passage. Kentigern, more fortunate, established upon the site of a burying-ground consecrated by Ninian the first foundation of the magnificent cathedral which still bears his name.[2]

It was consecrated by an Irish bishop, brought

[1] *Acta SS. Bolland.*, vol. i. January, p. 819.

[2] St Mungo's. This is the name borne by Kentigern in Scotland, and means, *dearest*. Kentigern seems to be derived from *Ken*, which means head, and *Tiern*, lord, in Welsh (Bolland., p. 820). The existing Cathedral of Glasgow was begun in 1124 by Bishop Jocelyn, a monk of Melrose, who at the same time caused a life of his predecessor Kentigern, derived from ancient authorities, to be written by another Jocelyn, a monk of Furness.

from Ireland for the purpose, and who celebrated that ceremony without the assistance of other bishops, according to Celtic customs. Kentigern collected round him numerous disciples, all learned in holy literature, all working with their hands, and possessing nothing as individuals—a true monastic community.[1] He distinguished himself during all his episcopate by his efforts to bring back to the faith the Picts of Galloway, which formed part of the kingdom of Strathclyde: and afterwards by numerous missions and monastic foundations throughout all Albyn—a name which was then given to midland Scotland. His disciples penetrated even to the Orkney Isles, where they must have met with the missionaries of Iona.[2]

The salutary and laborious activity of Kentigern must often have encroached upon the regions which were specially within the sphere of Columba. But the generous heart of Columba was inaccessible to jealousy. He was besides the personal friend of Kentigern and of King Roderick.[3] The fame of the Bishop of Strathclyde's apostolic labours drew him from his isle to do homage to his rival. He arrived from Iona with a great train

[1] "Accito autem de Hibernia uno episcopo, more Britonum et Scotorum, in episcopum ipsum consecrari fecerunt. . . . In singulis casulis, sicut ipse sanctus Kentigernus, commorabantur. Unde et singulares clerici a vulgo *Calledei* nuncupabantur."—JOCELYN, *Vita S. Kentig.* This last passage quoted by Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Isles*, p. 27, is not in the text given by the Bollandists.

[2] See above, p. 227.

[3] ADAMNAN, i. 15.

His meeting with Columba.

of monks, whom he arranged in three companies at the moment of their entrance into Glasgow. Kentigern distributed in the same way the numerous monks who surrounded him in his episcopal monastery, and whom he led out to meet the abbot of Iona. He divided them, according to their age, into three bands, the youngest of whom marched first; then those who had reached the age of manhood; and, last of all, the old and grey-haired, among whom he himself took his place. They all chanted the anthem *In viis Domini magna est gloria Domini, et via justorum facta est: et iter sanctorum præparatum est.* The monks of Iona, on their side, chanted in choir the versicle, *Ibunt sancti de virtute in virtutem: videbitur Deus eorum in Sion.* From each side echoed the Alleluia; and it was to the sound of those words of Holy Scripture, chanted in Latin by the Celtic monks of Wales and Ireland, that the two apostles of the Picts and Scots met at what had been the extreme boundary of the Roman Empire and limit of the power of the Cæsars, and upon a soil henceforth for ever freed from paganism and idolatry. They embraced each other tenderly, and passed several days in intimate and friendly intercourse.

The historian who has preserved for us the account of this interview does not conceal a less edifying incident. He confesses that some robbers had joined themselves to the following of the abbot of Iona, and that they took advantage of the general

enthusiasm to steal a ram from the bishop's flock. They were soon taken; but Kentigern pardoned them. Columba and his fellow-apostle exchanged their pastoral cross before they parted, in token of mutual affection.[1] Another annalist describes them as living together for six months in the monastery which Columba had just founded at Dunkeld, and together preaching the faith to the inhabitants of Athol and the mountainous regions inhabited by the Picts.[2]

I know not how far we may put faith in another narrative of the same author, which seems rather borrowed from the Gallo-Breton epic of Tristan and Iseult than from monastic legend, but which has nevertheless remained Kentigern's most popular title to fame. The wife of King Roderick, led astray by a guilty passion for a knight of her husband's court, had the weakness to bestow upon him a ring which had been given to her by the king. When Roderick was out hunting with this knight, the two took refuge on the banks of the Clyde during the heat of the day, and the knight, falling asleep, unwittingly stretched out his hand, upon

The legend of the queen's ring.

[1] "Sancti viri famam audiens, ad illum venire, visitare et familiaritatem ejus habere cupiebat . . . cum multa discipulorum turba. . . . In tertia turma senes decora canitie venerabiles. . . . Appropinquantes ad invicem sancti in amplexus mutuos et oscula sancta ruunt. . . . Venerunt cum sancto Columba quidam filii Belial ad furta et peccata assueti. . . . In signum mutuæ dilectionis alterius baculum suscepit."—BOLLAND., p. 821. The cross given by Columba to Kentigern was long preserved and venerated in the Anglo-Saxon Monastery of Ripon, Yorkshire.

[2] HECTOR BOETIUS, *Hist. Scotorum*, l. ix.

which the king saw the ring which he had given to the queen as a token of his love. It was with difficulty that he restrained himself from killing the knight on the spot; but he subdued his rage, and contented himself by taking the ring from his finger and throwing it into the river, without awakening the guilty sleeper. When he had returned to the town he demanded his ring from the queen, and, as she could not produce it, threw her into prison, and gave orders for her execution. She obtained, however, a delay of three days, and having in vain sought the ring from the knight to whom she had given it, she had recourse to the protection of St Kentigern. The good pastor knew or divined all —the ring, found in a salmon which he had caught in the Clyde, was already in his hands. He sent it to the queen, who showed it to her husband, and thus escaped the punishment which awaited her. Roderick even asked her pardon on his knees, and offered to punish her accusers. From this, however, she dissuaded him, and, hastening to Kentigern, confessed her fault to him, and was commanded to pass the rest of her life in penitence. It is for this reason that the ancient effigies of the apostle of Strathclyde represent him as holding always the episcopal cross in one hand, and in the other a salmon with a ring in its mouth.[1]

[1] "Contigit reginam . . . pretiosum annulum ob immensum amorem sibi a rege commendatum eidem militi contulisse. . . . Discopulatis canibus. . . . Fatigatus autem miles extenso brachio dormire cœpit. . . . Quum illa secreto militi in vanum mittens proferre non posset. . . . La-

But neither Kentigern, whose labours can scarcely be said to have survived him, nor Columba, whose influence upon the Picts and Scots was so powerful and lasting, exercised any direct or efficacious action upon the Anglo-Saxons, who became stronger and more formidable from day to day, and whose ferocious incursions threatened the Caledonian tribes no less than the Britons. It is apparent, however, that the great abbot of Iona did not share the repugnance, which had hardened into a system of repulsion, of the Welsh clergy for the Saxon race: express mention, on the contrary, is made in the most authentic documents connected with his history, of Saxon monks, who had been admitted into the community of Iona. One of them, for instance, had the office of baker there, and was reckoned among Columba's intimates.[1] But nothing indicates that these Saxons, who were enrolled under the authority of Columba, exercised any influence from thence upon their countrymen. On the contrary, while the Scotic-Briton missionaries spread over all the corners of Caledonia, and while Columba and his disciples carried the light of the

Neither Kentigern nor Columba affect the Anglo-Saxons, who continue always pagan, and more and more formidable.

crymosis precibus rem gestam sancto Kentigerno per nuntium exposuit. . . . Contristatus rex pro illatis reginæ injuriis, et veniam flexis genibus petens."—Bolland., p. 820; compare p. 815.

[1] Cummineus (apud Colgan, p. 320) mentions two Saxons: "Quidam religiosus frater, Genereus nomine, Saxo natione, pictor opere." And subsequently: "Duo ejus discipuli, Lugneus filius Blas et Pillo Saxo genere." Adamnan (iii. 10-22) corrects the conclusions which some authors have drawn from the word *pictor* by employing the words, *opus pistorium exercens*. See *ante*, page 153.

Gospel into the northern districts where it had never penetrated, the Christian faith and the Catholic Church languished and gave up the ghost in the southern part of the island under the ruins heaped up everywhere by the Saxon conquest.

Paganism and barbarism, vanquished by the Gospel in the Highlands of the north, again arose and triumphed in the south—in the most populous, accessible, and flourishing districts—throughout all that country, which was destined hereafter to play so great a part in the world, and which already began to call itself England. From 569 to 586—ten years before the death of Columba, and at the period when his authority was best established and most powerful in the north—the last champions of Christian Britain were finally cast out beyond the Severn, while at the same time new bands of Anglo-Saxons in the north, driving back the Picts to the other side of the Tweed, and crossing the Humber to the south, founded the future kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria. It is true that at a later period the sons of Columba carried the Gospel to those Northumbrians and Mercians. But at the end of the sixth century, after a hundred and fifty years of triumphant invasions and struggles, the Saxons had not yet encountered in any of the then Christian, or at least converted nations (Britons, Scots, and Picts), which they had assailed, fought, and vanquished, either missionaries disposed to announce the good news to them, nor priests

capable of maintaining the precious nucleus of faith among the conquered races. In 586 the two last bishops of conquered Britain, those of London and York, abandoned their churches and took refuge in the mountains of Wales, carrying with them the sacred vessels and holy relics which they had been able to save from the rapacity of the idolaters. Other husbandmen were then necessary. From whence were they to come? From the same inextinguishable centre, whence light had been brought to the Irish by Patrick, and to the Britons and Scots by Palladius, Ninian, and Germain.

And already they are here! At the moment when Columba approached the term of his long career in his northern isle, a year before his death, the envoys of Gregory the Great left Rome, and landed, where Cæsar had landed, upon the English shore.

BOOK X.

ST AUGUSTIN OF CANTERBURY AND THE ROMAN MISSIONARIES IN ENGLAND, 597-633.

"Hodie illuxit nobis dies redemptionis novæ, reparationis antiquæ, felicitatis æternæ."—*Christmas Office, Roman Breviary.*

CHAPTER I.

MISSION OF ST AUGUSTIN.

Origin and character of the Anglo-Saxons.—They have not to struggle, like the Franks, against the Roman Decadence.—The seven kingdoms of the Heptarchy.—Institutions, social and political: government patriarchal and federal; seigneury of the proprietors: the *witenagemot* or parliament; social inequality, the *ceorls* and the *eorls;* individual independence and aristocratic federation; fusion of the two races.—The conquered Britons lose the Christian faith.—Vices of the conquerors: slavery; commerce in human flesh.—The young Angles in the Roman market seen and bought by the monk Gregory.—Elected Pope, Gregory undertakes to convert the Angles by means of the monks of his Monastery of Mt. Cœlius, under the conduct of the abbot Augustin. —Critical situation of the Papacy.—Journey of the missionary monks across Gaul; their doubts; letters of Gregory.—Augustin lands at the same spot as Cæsar and the Saxon conquerors in the Isle of Thanet.—King Ethelbert; the queen, Bertha, already a Christian.—First interview under the oak; Ethelbert grants leave to preach.—Entry of the missionaries into Canterbury.—The spring-tide of the Church in England.—Baptism of Ethelbert.—Augustin Archbishop of Canterbury.—The palace of the king changed into a cathedral.—Monastery of St Augustin beyond the walls of Canterbury.—Donation from the king and the parliament.

Who then were the Anglo-Saxons, upon whom so many efforts were concentrated, and whose conquest is ranked, not without reason, among the most fruitful and most happy that the Church has ever accomplished? Of all the Germanic

tribes, the most stubborn, intrepid, and independent, this people seems to have transplanted with themselves into the great island which owes to them its name, the genius of the Germanic race, in order that it might bear on this predestined soil its richest and most abundant fruits. The Saxons brought with them a language, a character, and institutions stamped with a strong and invincible originality. Language, character, institutions, have triumphed, in their essential features, over the vicissitudes of time and fortune—have outlived all ulterior conquests, as well as all foreign influences, and, plunging their vigorous roots into the primitive soil of Celtic Britain, still exist at the indestructible foundation of the social edifice of England. Different from the Franks and Goths, who suffered themselves to be speedily neutralised or absorbed in Gaul, Italy, and Spain by the native elements, and still more by the remains of the Roman Decadence, the Saxons had the good fortune to find in Britain a soil free from imperial pollution. Less alienated from the Celtic Britons by their traditions and institutions—perhaps even by their origin — than by the jealousies and resentments of conquest, they had not after their victory to struggle against a spirit radically opposed to their own. Keeping intact and untamable their old Germanic spirit, their old morals, their stern independence, they gave from that moment to the free and proud genius of their race a vigorous upward

impulse which nothing has ever been able to bear down.

The seven kingdoms of the Heptarchy.

Starting in three distinct and successive emigrations from the peninsular region which separates the Baltic from the North Sea, they had found in the level shores of Britain a climate and an aspect like those of their native country. At the end of a century and a half of bloody contests they had made themselves masters of all that now bears the name of England, except the coast and the hilly regions of the west. They had founded there, by fire and sword, the seven kingdoms so well known under the title of the Heptarchy, which have left their names to several of the existing divisions of that country, where nothing falls into irreparable ruin, because everything there, as in nature, takes a new form and a fresh life. The Jutes, the first and most numerous immigrants, had established in the angle of the island nearest to Germany, the kingdom of Kent, and occupied a part of the coast of the Channel (the Isle of Wight and Hampshire). Then the Saxons, properly so called, spreading out and consolidating themselves from the east to the south, and from the south to the west, had stamped their name and their authority on the kingdoms of Essex, Sussex, and Wessex.[1] Finally, the Angles laid hold of the north and the east, and

[1] Saxons of the East, the South, and the West. The existing county of Middlesex bears witness to the same origin ; it is the region inhabited by the Saxons of the Middle.

there planted, first, the kingdom of East Anglia on the coast of the North Sea, and next that of Mercia in the unoccupied territory between the Thames and the Humber; then, to the north of the latter river, the largest of all the Saxon kingdoms, Northumbria, almost always divided into two, Deira and Bernicia, the confines of which stretched away to join the Picts and Scots, beyond even the limits which the Roman domination had lately reached.

Political and social institutions of the Anglo-Saxons.

This race of pirates and plunderers, hunters and robbers of their kind, possessed nevertheless the essential elements of social order. They made this clearly apparent as soon as they were able to settle down, and to adjust their settlements on that insular soil which the Britons had not been able to defend against the Romans, nor the Romans against the barbarians of the north, nor these last against the hardy seamen from the east. The Anglo-Saxons alone have been able to establish there an immovable order of society, whose first foundations were laid when the missionary monks came to bring to them the lights of faith and of Christian virtue.

At the end of the sixth century the Anglo-Saxons already formed a great people, subject, as the Celtic races had been, to the patriarchal and federal rule, which so happily distinguished those brave and free nations from the rabble corrupted by the solitary despotism of Rome. But among

them, as among all the Germanic races, this government was secured by the powerful guarantee of property. The wandering and disorderly clan, the primitive band of pirates and pillagers, disappears, or transforms itself, in order to make room for the family permanently established by the hereditary appropriation of the soil; and this soil was not only snatched from the vanquished race, but laboriously won from the forests, fens, and untilled moors. The chiefs and men of substance of these leading families formed a sovereign and warlike aristocracy, controlled by the kings, assemblies, and laws. Property.

The kings all belonged to a kind of caste composed of the families which professed to trace their descent from Odin or Woden, the deified monarch of German mythology:[1] their royalty was elective and limited: they could do nothing without the consent of those who accepted them as chiefs, but not as masters. The assemblies, which at first resembled those which Tacitus has recorded as existing among the Germans, and composed of the entire tribe (*folk-mot*) were speedily limited to the elders, to the wise men (*witena-gemot*), to the chiefs of the principal families of each tribe or kingdom, and to men endowed with the double prerogative of blood and property. They were held in the open air, under venerable oaks, and at stated periods; they took part in all the affairs of the body The kings. The assemblies.

[1] Ethelwerdi *Chronic.*, lib. i. p. 474, ap. Savile.

politic, and regulated with sovereign authority all rights that were established or defended by the laws.

Laws.

The laws themselves were simply treaties of peace discussed and guaranteed by the grand council of each little nation, between the king and those on whom depended his security and his power; between the different parties in every process, civil and criminal; between different groups of free men, all armed and all possessors of lands, incessantly exposed to risk their life, their possessions, the honour and safety of their wives, children, kindred, dependants, and friends, in daily conflicts springing from that individual right of making war which is to be found at the root of all German liberty and legislation.[1]

Social inequalities: *Ceorls* and *Eorls.*

Disparity of rank, which was in ancient times the inseparable companion of freedom, existed among the Saxons, as it did everywhere. The class of freemen—*ceorls*—possessors of land and of political power, who constituted the vital strength of the nation, had under them not only slaves, the fruit of their wars and conquests, but in much greater number servitors, labourers, dependants, who had not the same rights as they possessed; but they in their turn acknowledged as superiors the

[1] Palgrave, *The Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, London, 1832. Lappenberg, *Geschichte von England*, Hamburg, 1834. Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici* (London, 1839-48), and *The Saxons in England*, London, 1849. Baron D'Eckstein, various notices and memoirs.

nobles, the *eorls*, who were born to command, and to fill the offices of priest, judge, and chief, under the primary authority of the king.[1]

Thus that part of Great Britain which has since taken the name of England, was at this early period made up of an aggregation of tribes and independent communities, among which the exigencies of a common struggle against their warlike neighbours of the north and west helped to develop a gradual tendency towards union. It settled into an aristocratic federation, in which families of a reputedly divine origin presided over the social and military life of each tribe, but in which personal independence was at the base of the whole fabric. This independence was always able to reclaim its rights when a prince more than ordinarily dexterous and energetic encroached upon them. Its influence was everywhere felt in establishing and maintaining social life on the principle of free association for mutual benefit.[2] All that the freemen had not expressly given over to the chiefs established by themselves, or to associates freely accepted by them, remained for ever their own inviolable possession. Such, at that obscure and remote epoch,

[1] The Anglo-Saxon laws and diplomas, and particularly the charters of monastic endowments, constantly repeat this distinction between *ceorls* and *eorls*, which is found in the Scandinavian mythology, between the *Karls* and the *Jarls*, the offspring of the intercourse of a god with two different women. See the song of the first Edda, entitled *Rigsmal*. The word *ceorl* is the parent of the *churl* of modern English; as *eorl* is perpetuated in *earl*. The one has fallen in dignity, the other has risen.

[2] Kemble, *Saxons in England*, vol. ii. p. 312.

as in our own day, was the fundamental and gloriously unalterable principle of English public life.

The British population, which had survived the fury of the Saxon Conquest, and which had not been able or willing to seek for refuge in the mountains and peninsulas of Wales and Cornwall, seems to have accommodated itself to the new order of things. When the Conquest was fully achieved, in those districts where the indigenous race had not been completely exterminated,[1] no traces of insurrection or of general discontent are to be found among the British; and the opinion of those who maintain that the condition of the mass of the British population remaining in the conquered regions was not worse under the Saxon invaders than it had been under the yoke of the Romans, or even under that of their native princes, so reviled by their compatriot the historian Gildas, may be admitted as probable.[2] It may even be supposed that this fusion of the conquerors and the conquered was productive of great benefit to the former. It would

[1] It has been already stated that in some districts the Saxons annihilated the conquered population. But this was only in exceptional cases. See on this subject the excellent summary of Burke in his *Abridged Essay on the History of England*—a work too much forgotten, though altogether worthy of the greatest of Englishmen.

[2] Such is, especially, the opinion of Kemble, who otherwise generalises too freely upon the exaggerations of history in relation to the oppression or extermination of vanquished nations. The events which since 1772 have occurred in Poland, in Lithuania, in Circassia, and elsewhere, prove that it is very possible, even in the full light of modern civilisation, and under princes consecrated before the altar of the living God, to proceed with an invincible determination to the destruction of human races.

be hard to say whether the heroic tenacity which has become the distinctive characteristic of the English may not have been derived mainly from that vigorous race which, after having coped with Cæsar, proved itself the only one among all the nations subjected to the Roman yoke capable of struggling for two centuries against the invasion of the barbarians.[1]

The vanquished Britons lose the Christian faith.

But this assimilation of the two races could not but operate to the prejudice of the Christian faith. Unlike the barbarian invaders of the Continent, the Saxons did not adopt the religion of the people they had subdued. In Gaul, Spain, and Italy, Christianity had flourished anew, and gained fresh strength under the dominion of the Franks and the Goths; it had conquered the conquerors. In Britain it disappeared under the pressure of the alien conquest. No traces of Christianity remained in the districts under Saxon sway when Rome sent thither her missionaries. Here and there a ruined church might be found, but not one living Christian amongst the natives;[2] conquerors and conquered alike were lost in the darkness of paganism.

It is not necessary to inquire whether, along with this proud and vigorous independence, in which we have recognised a rare and singularly advanced condition of political intelligence and social vitality, the Anglo-Saxons exhibited moral virtues of an equally elevated order. Such an assertion no one

[1] La Borderie, p. 231. [2] Burke, *Works*, vol. vi. p. 216.

would be disposed to believe. Certainly "there existed under this native barbarism noble dispositions unknown to the Roman world. Under the brute the free man, and also the man of heart, might always be discovered."[1] Even more, intermingled with daily outbursts of daring and of violence there might also be found miracles of heroic and simple devotion—of sincere and lofty enthusiasm—which emulated or forestalled Christianity. But alongside of these wonders of primitive virtue, what miracles of vice and crime, of avarice, lust, and ferocity! The religion of their Scandinavian forefathers, whose primitive myths concealed no small amount of traditional truth under symbols full of grace and majesty, was only too soon corrupted or obscured. It did not preserve them from any excess, superstition, or fetishism: perhaps not even from the human sacrifices which were known to all other pagan nations. What could be expected in point of morality from people accustomed to invoke and to worship Woden, the god of massacres, Freya, the Venus of the North, the goddess of sensuality, and all these bloody and obscene gods of whom one had for his emblem a naked sword, and another the hammer with which he broke the heads of his enemies?[2] The immortality which was promised to them in their Walhalla but reserved for them new

Vices of the conquerors.

[1] TAINE, *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise.*

[2] See the interesting chapter on the religion of the Germans in Ozanam's *Germains avant le Christianisme*, 1847.

days of slaughter and nights of debauch, spent in drinking deep from the skulls of their victims. And in this world their life was but too often only a prolonged orgie of carnage, rapine, and lechery. The traditional respect for woman which marked the Germanic tribes was limited among the Saxons, as elsewhere, by singular exceptions, and did not extend beyond the princesses or the daughters of the victorious and dominant race.

Slavery.

Such mercy as they ever showed to the vanquished consisted only in sparing their lives in order to reduce them to servitude, and sell them as slaves. That frightful slave-traffic which has disgraced successively all pagan and all Christian nations was among them carried on with a kind of inveterate passion.[1] It needed, as we shall see, whole centuries of incessant efforts to extirpate it. Nor was it only captives and vanquished foes that they condemned to this extremity of misfortune and shame: it was their kindred, their fellow-countrymen: even, like Joseph's brethren, those of their own blood, their sons and daughters, that they set up to auction and sold to merchants who came from the Continent to supply themselves in the Anglo-Saxon market with these human chattels. It was by this infamous commerce that Great Britain, having become almost as great a stranger

The trade in human cattle.

[1] "Venales ex Northumbria pueri, familiari et pene ingenita illi nationi consuetudine, adeo ut, sicut nostra quoque sæcula viderunt non dubitarent arctissimas necessitudines sub prætextu minimorum commodorum distrahere."—Willelmus Malmesburiensis, *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, i. 3.

to the rest of Europe as she was before the days of Cæsar, re-entered the circle of the nations, making herself known once more, as in the time of Cæsar, when Cicero anticipated no other profit to Rome from the expedition of the proconsul than the produce of the sale of British slaves.[1]

Nevertheless, it was from the depth of this shameful abyss that God was about to evolve the opportunity of delivering England from the fetters of paganism, of introducing her by the hand of the greatest of the Popes into the bosom of the Church, and, at the same time, of bringing her within the pale of Christian civilisation.

Anglo-Saxon children sold at Rome.

Who will ever explain to us how these traffickers in men found a market for their merchandise at Rome? Yes, at Rome, in the full light of Christianity, six centuries after the birth of the Divine Deliverer, and three centuries after the peace of the Church; at Rome, governed since Constantine by Christian emperors, and in which was gradually developing the temporal sovereignty of the Popes. It was so, however, in the year of grace 586 or 587, under Pope Pelagius II. Slaves of both sexes and of all countries, and among them some children, young Saxons, were exposed for sale in the Roman forum like any other commodity. Priests and monks mingled with the crowd that

[1] "Britannici belli exitus exspectatur. . . . Illud cognitum est, neque argenti scripulum ullum esse in illa insula, neque ullam spem prædæ nisi ex mancipiis."—*Epist. ad. Attic.*, iv. 16.

came to bid or to look on at the auction; and among the spectators appears the gentle, the generous, the immortal Gregory.[1] He thus learned to detest this leprosy of slavery which it was afterwards given him to restrict and to contend against, though not to extirpate it.[2]

St Gregory the Great inquires about, and redeems them.

This scene, which the father of English history found among the traditions of his Northumbrian ancestors, and the dialogue in which are portrayed with such touching and quaint originality the pious and compassionate spirit of Gregory, and at the same time his strange love of punning, has been a hundred times rehearsed. Every one knows how, at the sight of these young slaves, struck with the beauty of their countenances, the dazzling purity of their complexions, the length of their fair locks (probable index of aristocratic birth) he inquired what was their country and their religion. The slave-dealer informed him that they came from the island of Britain, where every one had the same beauty of complexion, and that they were heathens. Heaving a profound sigh, "What evil luck," cried Gregory, "that the Prince of Darkness should possess beings with an aspect so radiant, and that the grace of these countenances should reflect a soul

[1] "Die quadam cum advenientibus nuper mercatoribus multa venalia in forum fuissent collata, multique ad emendum confluxissent, et ipsum Gregorium inter alios advenisse, ac vidisse inter alia pueros venales positos."—BEDE, ii. 1.

[2] JOAN. DIAC., *Vita S. Gregorii*, iv. 45, 46, 47. S. GREG., *Epist.*, iv. 9, 13; vii. 24, 38, and elsewhere.

void of the inward grace! But what nation are they of?" "They are Angles." "They are well named, for these Angles have the faces of angels; and they must become the brethren of the angels in heaven. From what province have they been brought?" "From Deïra" (one of the two kingdoms of Northumbria). "Still good," answered he. "*De ira eruti*—they shall be snatched from the ire of God, and called to the mercy of Christ. And how name they the king of their country?" "Alle or Ælla." "So be it; he is right well named, for they shall soon sing the Alleluia in his kingdom."[1]

It is natural to believe that the rich and charitable abbot bought these captive children, and that he conveyed them at once to his own home—that is to say, to the palace of his father, where he was born, which he had changed into a monastery, and which was not far from the forum where the young Britons were exposed for sale. The purchase of these three or four slaves was thus the origin of the redemption of all England.

[1] "Nec silentio prætereunda opinio quæ de beato Gregorio traditione majorum ad nos usque perlata est. . . . Candidi et lactei corporis, venusti vultus, capillorum forma egregia . . . crine rutila. . . . Intimo ex corde suspiria ducens . . . interrogavit mercatorem. . . . De Britanniæ insula cujus incolarum omnis facies simili candore fulgescit. . . . Heu proh dolor! quod tam lucidi vultus . . . tantaque gratia frontispicii. . . . Bene Angli quasi angeli, quia et angelicos vultus habent. . . . Bene quia rex dicitur Aelle. Alleluia etenim in partibus illis oportet decantari."—Bede, *loc. cit.* Paul Diac., *Vita S. Gregorii*, c. 14. Joan Diac., *Vita S. Gregorii*, i. 21. Gotselini, *Historia Maior de Vita S. Augustini*, c. 4. Lappenberg, p. 138. The name of Ælla fixes the date of this incident to a period necessarily prior to the death of this prince in 588.

An Anglo-Saxon chronicler, a Christian but a layman, who wrote four centuries later, but who exemplifies the influence of domestic traditions among that people by giving to his own genealogy a very high rank in the history of his race,[1] says expressly that Gregory lodged his guests in the *triclinium*, where he loved to serve with his own hand the table of the poor, and that after he had instructed and baptised them, it was his desire to take them with him as his companions, and to return to their native land in order to convert it to Christ. All authors unanimously admit that from that moment he conceived the grand design of bringing over the Anglo-Saxons to the Catholic Church. To this design he consecrated a perseverance, a devotion, and a prudence which the greatest men have not surpassed. We have already seen how, after this scene in the slave-market, he sought and obtained from the Pope permission to go as a missionary to the Anglo-Saxons, and how, at the tidings of his departure, the Romans, after overwhelming the Pope with reproaches, ran after their future pontiff, and, overtaking him three days' journey from Rome, brought him back by force to the Eternal City.[2]

Scarcely had he been elected Pope, when his great 590.
and cherished design became the object of his constant thought. His intrepid soul dwells on it with

[1] Ethelwerdi *Chronic.*, lib. ii. c. 1. See his curious preamble to his cousin Matilda, in Savile, and the remarks of Lappenberg, p. 55.

[2] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 91.

an unfailing interest, and his vast correspondence everywhere testifies its existence.[1] While waiting until he should discover the fit man to conduct this special mission, he never forgot the English slaves —the heathen children whose sad lot had been the means of revealing to him the conquest which God had in store for him, and whose brothers were to be found in the slave-markets of other Christian countries. He writes to the priest Candidius, who had the management of the patrimony of the Roman Church in Gaul, "We charge you to lay out the money which you have received, in the purchase of young English slaves, of seventeen or eighteen years of age, whom you shall train in the monastery for the service of God. In this way the coins of Gaul, which are not current here, will be put on the spot to a suitable use. If you can draw anything from the revenues which they say have been withheld from us, you must employ it equally either to procure clothing for the poor or to buy these young slaves. But as they will yet be heathens, they must be accompanied by a priest, who may baptise them if they fall sick by the way."[2] At last, in the sixth year of his pontificate, he decided to select as the

[1] *Epist.*, ix. 108, ad Syagrium episc. Augustodunensem. "Cum pro convertendis Anglis-Saxonibus, quemadmodum in monachatu suo proposuerat, assiduis cogitationum fluctibus urgeretur."—Joan Diac., ii. 33.

[2] "Volumus ut dilectio tua . . . quatenus solidi Galliarum qui in terra nostra expendi non possunt apud locum proprium utiliter expendantur. . . . Sed quia pagani sunt . . . volo ut cum eis presbyter transmittatur ne quid ægritudinis contingat in via, ut quos morituros conspexerit, debeat baptizare."—*Epist.*, vi. 7.

apostles of the distant island, whither his thoughts continually carried him, the monks of the Monastery of St Andrew, on Mount Cœlius, and to appoint as their leader Augustin, the prior of that beloved house.

The monastery whence issued the apostles of England.

This monastery is the one which now bears the name of St Gregory, and is known to all who have visited Rome. That incomparable city contains few spots more attractive and more worthy of eternal remembrance. The sanctuary occupies the western angle of Mount Cœlius, and the site of the hallowed grove and fountain which Roman mythology has consecrated by the graceful and touching fable of Numa and the nymph Egeria.[1] It is at an equal distance from the Circus Maximus, the baths of Caracalla, and the Coliseum, and near to the church of the holy martyrs John and Paul. The cradle of English Christianity is thus planted on the soil steeped with the blood of many thousands of martyrs. In front rises the Mons Palatinus, the cradle of heathen Rome, still covered with the vast remains of the palace of the Cæsars. To the left of the grand staircase which leads to the existing monastery, three small buildings stand apart on a plot of grass.[2] On the door of one you read these words—*Triclinium Pauperum;* and within is preserved the table at which every day were seated the twelve beggars whom Gregory fed

[1] Ampere, *L'Histoire Romaine à Rome*, pp. 4, 370, 498.
[2] Gerbet, *Esquisse de Rome Chrétienne*, vol. i. p. 447.

and personally waited upon. The other is dedicated to the memory of his mother, Silvia, who had followed his example in devoting herself to a religious life, and whose portrait he had caused to be painted in the porch of his monastery.[1]

Between these two small edifices stands the oratory dedicated by Gregory, while still a simple monk, to the apostle St Andrew, at the time when he transformed his patrimonial mansion into the cloister whence were to issue the apostles of England. In the church of the monastery, which now belongs to the Camaldolites, is still shown the pulpit from which Gregory preached, the bed on which he took his brief repose, the altar before which he must have so often prayed for the conversion of his beloved English. On the façade of the church an inscription records that thence set out the first apostles of the Anglo-Saxons, and preserves their names.[2] Under the porch are seen the

[1] Joan Diac., *Vita Gregorii*, iv. c. 83.

[2] The following is the exact text of the inscription, transcribed by the friendly hand of an eloquent monk of our time and country, Father Hyacinth, of the Barefooted Carmelites :—

EX HOC MONASTERIO
PRODIERVNT

S. GREGORIVS. M. FVNDATOR. ET. PARENS.—S. ELVTHERIVS. AB.—S. HILARION. AB.—S. AVGVSTINVS. ANGLOR. APOSTOL.—S. LAVRENTIVS. CANTUAR. ARCHIEP.—S. MELLITVS. LONDINEN. EP. MOX. ARCHIEP. CANTVAR.—S. JVSTVS EP. ROFFENSIS.—S. PAVLINVS. EP. EBORAC.—S. MAXIMIANVS. SYRACVSAN. EP.—SS. ANTONIVS. MERVLVS. ET. JOANNES. MONACHI.—S. PETRVS. AB. CANTVAR.

HONORIVS. ARCHIEP. CANTVAR.—MARINIANVS. ARCHIEP. RAVEN.—PROBVS. XENODOCHI. IEROSOLYMIT. CURATOR. A. S. GREGORIO. ELECT.—SABINVS.

tombs of some generous Englishmen who died in exile for their fidelity to the religion which these apostles taught them; and, among other sepulchral inscriptions, this which follows may be remarked and remembered: "Here lies Robert Pecham, an English Catholic, who, after the disruption of England and the Church, quitted his country, unable to endure life there without the faith, and who, coming to Rome, died, unable to endure life here without his country."[1]

Where is the Englishman worthy of the name who, in looking from the Palatine to the Coliseum, could contemplate without emotion and without remorse this spot from whence have come to him the faith and name of Christian, the Bible of which he is so proud — the Church herself of which he has preserved but the shadow? Here were the enslaved children of his ancestors gathered together and saved. On these stones they knelt who made his country Christian. Under these roofs was the grand design conceived by a saintly mind, intrusted to God, blessed by Him, accepted and carried out by humble and generous Christians. By these steps descended the forty monks who bore to

CALLIPOLIT. EP.—FELIX. MESSANEN. EP. — GREGORIVS. DIAC. CARD. S. EUSTACH.

HIC. ETIAM. DIU. VIXIT. M. GREGORII. MATER. S. SILVIA. HOC. MAXIME. COLENDA. QVOD. TANTVM. PIETATIS. SAPIENTIAE. ET. DOCTRINAE. LVMEN. PEPERERIT.

[1] Quoted in the address of M. Augustin Cochin to the Congress at Malines, 20th August 1863.

England the word of God and the light of the Gospel along with Catholic unity, the apostolical succession, and the rule of St Benedict. No country ever received the gift of salvation more directly from popes and monks, and none, alas! so soon and so cruelly betrayed them.

Critical state of the Papacy.

Nothing could be more sad and sombre than the state of the Church at the epoch when Gregory resolved to put his project into execution. This great man—by turns soldier, general, statesman, administrator, and legislator, but always, and before all, pontiff and apostle—had need of more than human boldness to take in hand distant conquests, surrounded as he was by perils and disasters, and at a moment when Rome, devastated by plague, famine, and the inundations of the Tiber, mercilessly taxed and shamelessly abandoned by the Byzantine emperors, was struggling against the aggressions of the Lombards, which became every day more menacing.[1] It is not without reason that a writer more learned than enthusiastic represents the expedition of Augustin as an act as heroic as Scipio's departure for Africa while Hannibal was at the gates of Rome.[2]

Journey of the monkish missionaries across Gaul.

Absolutely nothing is known of Augustin's history previous to the solemn days on which, in obedience to the commands of the pontiff, who had been his abbot, he and his forty comrades

[1] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 84.

[2] KEMBLE, *Saxons in England*, vol. ii. p. 357.

tore themselves from the motherly bosom of that community which was to them as their native land. He must, as prior of the monastery, have exhibited distinguished qualifications ere he could have been chosen by Gregory for such a mission. But there is nothing to show that his companions were at that time animated with the same zeal which inspired the Pope. They arrived without hindrance in Provence, and stopped for some time at Lerins, in that Mediterranean isle of the Saints where, a century and a half before, Patrick, the monastic apostle of the western isle of Saints, had sojourned for nine years before he was sent by Pope Celestine to evangelise Ireland. But, there or elsewhere, the Roman monks received frightful accounts of the country which they were going to convert. They were told that the Anglo-Saxon people, of whose language they were ignorant, were a nation of wild beasts, thirsting for innocent blood—a race whom it was impossible to approach or conciliate, and to land on whose coast was to rush to certain destruction. They took fright at these tales; and in place of continuing their route, they persuaded Augustin to return to Rome to beseech the Pope to relieve them from a journey so toilsome, so perilous, and so useless.[1] Instead of listening to their request, Gregory sent

[1] "Augustini sanctorumque fratrum a maternis visceribus monasterialis ecclesiæ avulserunt. . . . Nuntiatur quod gens quam peterent immanior belluis existeret."—GOTSELINUS, *Historia Maior*, c. 3, 6. "Perculsi timore inerti . . . ne tam periculosam, tam laboriosam, tam inutilem prædicationem adire deberent."—BEDE, i. 23.

Letters of the Pope.

Augustin back to them with a letter in which they were ordered to recognise him henceforth as their abbot—to obey him in everything, and, above all, not to let themselves be terrified by the toils of the way or by the tongue of the detractor. "Better were it," wrote Gregory, "not to begin that good work at all, than to give it up after having commenced it. . . . Forward, then, in God's name! . . . The more you have to suffer, the brighter will your glory be in eternity. May the grace of the Almighty protect you, and grant to me to behold the fruit of your labours in the eternal country; if I cannot share your toil, I shall none the less rejoice in the harvest, for God knows that I lack not good will."[1]

23d July 596.

Augustin was the bearer of numerous letters of the same date,[2] written by the Pope first of all to the Abbot of Lerins, to the Bishop of Aix, and to the Governor of Provence, thanking them for the hearty welcome they had given to his missionaries; and next to the Bishops of Tours, of Marseilles, of Vienne, and of Autun; and, above all, to Virgilius, Metropolitan of Arles, warmly recommending to them Augustin and his mission, but without explaining its nature or its aim.

He acted differently in his letters to the two young kings of Austrasia and of Burgundy, and to

[1] "Quatenus etsi vobiscum laborare nequeo, simul in gaudio retributionis inveniar, quia laborare scilicet volo."—Bede, i. 23.

[2] 23d July 596.

their mother, Brunehaut, who reigned in their name over the whole of Eastern France. In appealing to the orthodoxy which distinguished beyond all others the Frank nation, he announces to them that he has learned that the English were disposed to receive the Christian faith, but that the priests of the neighbouring regions (that is, of Wales) took no pains to preach it to them; wherefore he asks that the missionaries sent by him to enlighten and save the English may obtain interpreters to go with them across the Straits, and a royal safe-conduct to guarantee their safety during their journey through France.[1]

Thus stimulated and recommended, Augustin and his monks took courage and again set out upon their way. Their obedience won the victory which the magnanimous ardour of the great Gregory had failed to secure. They traversed the whole of France, ascending the Rhone and descending the Loire, protected by the princes and bishops to whom the Pope had recommended them, but not without suffering more than one insult at the hands of the lower orders, especially in Anjou, where these forty men, in pilgrim garb, walking together, resting sometimes at night under no other shelter than that of a large tree, were regarded as were-wolves, and were assailed (by the women particularly) with yellings and abuse.[2]

[1] *Epist.*, vi. 53-59.

[2] "Tot homines peregrinos pedestri incessu et habitu humiles quasi tot

Augustin lands where previously Cæsar and the first Saxons had disembarked.

After having thus traversed the whole of Frankish Gaul, Augustin and his companions brought their journey to a close on the southern shore of Great Britain, at the point where it approaches nearest to the Continent, and where the previous conquerors of England had already landed: Julius Cæsar, who revealed it to the Roman world; and Hengist with his Saxons, who brought to it with its new name the ineffaceable impress of the Germanic race. To these two conquests, a third—destined to be the last—was now about to succeed. For it is impossible to place in the same rank the victorious invasions of the Danes and the Normans, who, akin to the Saxons in blood and manners, have indeed cruelly troubled the life of the English people, but have effected no radical change in its social and moral order, and have not been able to touch either its language, its religion, or its national character.

The new conquerors, like Julius Cæsar, arrived under the ensigns of Rome—but of Rome the Eternal, not the Imperial. They came to restore the law of the Gospel which the Saxons had drowned in blood. But in setting, for ever, the seal of the Christian faith upon the soil of England, they struck no blow at the independent character and powerful originality of the people, whom, in con-

lupos et ignota monstra repulere. Mulierculæ simul conglomeratæ tanta . . . insania, tribulatu, despectu, subsannatione, derisione in sanctos Dei sunt debacchatæ. . . . Stabat juxta ulmus ampla . . . sub hac sancti volentes ipsa nocte requiescere."—GOTSELINUS, c. 10.

verting them to the true faith, they succeeded in consolidating into a nation.

On the south side of the mouth of the river Thames, and at the north-east corner of the county of Kent, lies a district which is still called the Isle of Thanet, although the name of *isle* no longer befits it, as the arm of the sea which at one time separated it from the mainland is now little better than a brackish and marshy brook. There, where the steep white cliffs of the coast suddenly divide to make way for a sandy creek, near the ancient port of the Romans at Richborough, and between the modern towns of Sandwich and Ramsgate,[1] the Roman monks set foot for the first time on British soil.[2] The rock which received the first print of the footsteps of Augustin was long preserved and venerated, and was the object of many pilgrimages, in gratitude to the living God for having led thither the apostle of England.[3]

[1] It is pleasant to know that in this same town of Ramsgate, on the shore where the Abbot Augustin landed, the sons of St Benedict have been able, after the lapse of thirteen centuries, to erect a new sanctuary, near to a church dedicated to St Augustin, designed and built by the liberality of the great Catholic architect Pugin. This monastic colony belongs to the new Benedictine province of Subiaco.

[2] In a book entitled *Historical Memorials of Canterbury*, 1855, Dr Stanley, Dean of Westminster, has examined and determined, with no less enthusiasm than scrupulous exactness, the facts relative to the arrival of St Augustin. He has confirmed the already old opinion which fixes the very place of his landing at a farm now called *Ebbsfleet*, situated upon a promontory, from which the sea has now withdrawn.

[3] Stanley, p. 14. Oakley, *Life of St Augustin*, 1844, p. 91. This life forms part of the interesting series of *Lives of the English Saints*, published by the principal writers of the Puseyite school before their conversion.

Immediately on his arrival the envoy of Pope Gregory despatched the interpreters, with whom he had been provided in France, to the king of the country in which the missionaries had landed, to announce to him that they came from Rome, and that they brought to him the best of news—the true glad tidings—the promise of celestial joy, and of an eternal reign in the fellowship of the living and true God.[1]

The king's name was Ethelbert, which means in Anglo-Saxon *noble* and *valiant*.[2] Great-grandson of Hengist, the first of the Saxon conquerors, who himself was supposed to be a descendant of one of the three sons of Odin, he reigned for thirty-six years over the oldest kingdom of the Heptarchy—that of Kent—and had just gained over all the other Saxon kings and princes, even to the confines of Northumbria, that kind of military supremacy which was attached to the title of Bretwalda, or temporary chief of the Saxon Confederation.[3]

Queen Bertha.

It was to be supposed that he would have a natural prepossession in favour of the Christian religion. It was the faith of his wife Bertha, who was the daughter of Caribert, king of the Franks of Paris, and grandson of Clovis, and whose mother was

[1] "Mandavit se venisse de Roma et nuntium ferre optimum . . . æterna in cœlis gaudia et regnum sine fine cum Deo vivo et vero futurum." —Bede, i. 25.

[2] The root *Ethel*, which we shall find in almost all the names, male and female, which we shall quote, corresponds to the German adjective *edel*, noble.

[3] Bede, i. 25; ii. 3, 5.

that Ingoberga whose gentle virtues and domestic troubles have been recorded by Gregory of Tours.[1] She had been affianced to the heathen king of the Saxons of Kent only on the condition that she should be free to observe the precepts and practices of her faith, under the care of a Gaulo-Frankish bishop, Liudhard of Senlis, who had remained with her until his death, which occurred immediately before the arrival of Augustin. Tradition records the gentle and lovable virtues of Queen Bertha, and her judicious zeal for the conversion of her husband and his subjects. It is believed to have been from her that Gregory received his information as to the desire of the English to be converted, with which he had enlisted the interest of Brunehaut and her sons.[2] The great-granddaughter of St Clotilda seemed thus destined to be herself the St Clotilda of England. But too little is known of her life: she has left but a brief and uncertain illumination on those distant and dark horizons over which she rises like a star, the herald of the sun of truth.

Meanwhile King Ethelbert did not immediately permit the Roman monks to visit him in the Roman city of Canterbury where he dwelt. While pro-

[1] Greg. Turon., *Hist. Franc.*, iv. 26, ix. 26.

[2] "Quam ea conducere a parentibus acceperat, ut ritum fidei ac religionis suæ cum episcopo quem ei adjutorem fidei dederant, nomine Liudhardo, inviolatam servare licentiam haberet."—Bede, *loc. cit.* "Pervenit ad nos Anglorum gentem ad fidem Christianam Deo miserante desideranter velle converti."—S. Gregorii *Epist.*, vi. 58; compare *Epist.*, xi. 29.

viding for their maintenance, he forbade their leaving the island on which they had landed until he had deliberated on the course he should pursue. At the close of some days he himself went to visit them, but he would not meet them except in the open air. It is difficult to imagine what pagan superstition made him dread foul play if he allowed himself to be brought under the same roof with the strangers. At the sound of his approach they advanced to meet him in procession.

"The history of the Church," says Bossuet,[1] "contains nothing finer than the entrance of the holy monk Augustin into the kingdom of Kent with forty of his companions, who, preceded by the cross and the image of the great king our Lord Jesus Christ, offered their solemn prayers for the conversion of England." At that solemn moment when, upon a soil once Christian, Christianity found itself once more face to face with idolatry, the strangers besought the true God to save, with their own souls, all those souls for whose love they had torn themselves from their peaceful cloister at home, and had taken this hard enterprise in hand. They chanted the litanies in use at Rome in the solemn and touching strains which they had learnt from Gregory, their spiritual father and the father of religious music. At their head marched Augustin, whose lofty stature and patrician presence attracted every eye, for, like Saul, "he was higher

[1] *Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle.*

than any of the people from his shoulders and upwards."[1]

The king, surrounded by a great number of his followers, received them seated under a great oak, and made them sit down before him. After having listened to the address which they delivered to him and to the assembly, he gave them a loyal, sincere, and, as we should say in these days, truly liberal answer. "You make fair speeches and promises," he said, "but all this is to me new and uncertain. I cannot all at once put faith in what you tell me, and abandon all that I, with my whole nation, have for so long a time held sacred. But since you have come from so far away to impart to us what you yourselves, by what I see, believe to be the truth and the supreme good, we shall do you no hurt: on the contrary, we shall show you all hospitality, and shall take care to furnish you with the means of living. We shall not hinder you from preaching your religion, and you shall convert whom you can." By these words the king intimated to them his desire to reconcile fidelity to the national customs, with a respect for liberty of conscience too rarely found in history. The Catholic Church thus met, from her first entrance into England, that promise of liberty which has during so many ages been the first and most fundamental article of all English charters and constitutions.

[1] "Beati Augustini formam et personam patriciam, staturam proceram et arduam, adeo ut a scapulis populo superemineret."—GOTSEL., *Vita*, c. 45.

Faithful to his engagement, Ethelbert allowed the missionaries to follow him to Canterbury, where he assigned them a dwelling, which still exists under the name of the Stable Gate. The forty missionaries made a solemn entry into the town, carrying their silver cross, along with a picture of Christ painted on wood, and chanting in unison the response of their litany, "We beseech Thee, O Lord, by Thy pity, to spare in Thy wrath this city and Thy holy house, for we have sinned. Alleluia." It was thus, says a monastic historian, that the first fathers and teachers of the faith in England entered their future metropolis, and inaugurated the triumphant labours of the cross of Jesus.[1]

There was outside the town, to the east, a small church dedicated to St Martin, dating from the time of the Romans, whither Queen Bertha was in the habit of going to pray, and to celebrate the offices of religion. Thither also went Augustin and his companions to chant their monastic office, to celebrate mass, to preach, and to baptise.[2] Here,

[1] "Ad jussionem regis residentes, verbum Dei vitæ, una cum omnibus qui aderant ejus comitibus, prædicarent. . . . Pulchra sunt quidem verba et promissa, sed quia nova sunt et incerta. . . . Nec prohibemus quin omnes quos potestis fidei vestræ religionis prædicando societis. . . . Crucem pro vexilla ferentes argenteam et imaginem Domini salvatoris in tabula depictam, lætaniasque canentes. . . . Pro sua simul et eorum propter quos et ad quos venerant salute æterna . . . consona voce." —Bede, i. 25. "Tali devotione proto-doctoribus et in fide Christi proto-patribus Angliæ metropolim suam cum triumphali crucis labore ingredientibus: *Aperite portas,*" &c.—Gotselinus, *Historia Minor de Vita S. Aug.*, c. 12.

[2] The existing church, rebuilt in the thirteenth century, occupies the place of that which is for ever consecrated by the double memory of

then, we behold them, provided, thanks to the royal munificence, with the necessaries of life, endowed with the supreme blessing of liberty, and using that liberty in labouring to propagate the truth. They lived here, says the most truthful of their historians, the life of the apostles in the primitive Church—assiduous in prayer, in vigils, in fasts; they preached the word of life to all whom they could reach, and, despising this world's goods, accepting from their converts nothing beyond what was strictly necessary, lived in all harmony with their doctrine, and ever ready to suffer or to die for the truth they preached. The innocent simplicity of their life, and the heavenly sweetness of their doctrine, appeared to the Saxons arguments of an invincible eloquence; and every day the number of candidates for baptism increased.[1]

Such fair days occur at the outset of all great undertakings. They do not last, thanks to the lamentable and incurable infirmity of all human things; but yet they should never be forgotten, nor remembered without honour. They are the blossoming time of noble lives. History serves no more salutary purpose than in transmitting their perfume to us. The Church of Canterbury for a

The spring-time of the Church in England.

Bertha the Queen and Augustin the Archbishop. The baptismal fonts are shown there in which, according to tradition, King Ethelbert was baptised by immersion.

1 "Paratum ad patiendum adversa quæque, vel etiam ad moriendum animum habendo. . . . Mirantes simplicitatem innocentis vitæ ac dulcedinem doctrinæ eorum cœlestis."—Bede, i. 26.

thousand years possessed unparalleled splendours; no Church in the world, after the Church of Rome, has been governed by greater men, or has waged more glorious conflicts. But nothing in her brilliant annals could eclipse the sweet and pure light of that humble beginning, where a handful of strangers, Italian monks, sheltered by the generous hospitality of an honest-hearted king, and guided by the inspiration of the greatest of the Popes, applied themselves in prayer, and abstinence, and toil, to the work of winning over the ancestors of a great people to God, to virtue, and to truth.

Baptism of King Ethelbert.

The good and loyal Ethelbert did not lose sight of them; soon, charmed like so many others by the purity of their life, and allured by their promises, the truth of which was attested by more than one miracle, he sought and obtained baptism at the hand of Augustin. It was on Whit Sunday,[1] in the year of grace 597, that this Anglo-Saxon king entered into the unity of the Holy Church of Christ. Since the baptism of Constantine, and excepting that of Clovis, there had not been any event of greater moment in the annals of Christendom.[2]

A crowd of Saxons followed the example of their king, and the missionaries issued from their first asylum to preach in all quarters, building churches also here and there. The king, faithful to the last to that noble respect for the individual conscience

[1] 2d June 597.

[2] STANLEY, p. 19.

of which he had given proof even before he was a Christian, was unwilling to constrain any one to change his religion. He allowed himself to show no preference, save a deeper love for those who, baptised like himself, became his fellow-citizens in the heavenly kingdom. The Saxon king had learned from the Italian monks that no constraint is compatible with the service of Christ.[1] It was not to unite England to the Roman Church, it was in order to tear her from it, a thousand years after this, that another king and other apostles had to employ the torture and the stake.

In the meanwhile Augustin, perceiving that he should henceforward be at the head of an important Christian community, and in conformity to the Pope's instructions, returned to France in order to be there consecrated Archbishop of the English by the celebrated Metropolitan of Arles, Virgilius, the former abbot of Lerins, whom Gregory had appointed his vicar over all the churches of the Frankish kingdom. 25th Dec. 597.

On his return to Canterbury he found that the example of the king and the labours of his com-

[1] "Ipse etiam inter alios delectatus vita mundissima sanctorum et promissis . . . quæ vere esse miraculorum quoque multorum ostensione firmaverant. . . . Unitati se sanctæ Ecclesiæ Christi credendo sociare. Quorum fidei et conversioni ita congratulatus esse rex perhibetur, ut nullum tamen cogeret ad Christianismum: sed tantummodo credentes arctiori dilectione, quasi concives sibi regni cœlestis, amplecteretur. Didicerat enim a doctoribus auctoribusque suæ salutis, servitium Christi voluntarium, non coactitium esse debere."—Bede, i. 26. Yet Bede himself speaks, farther on, of those who had embraced the faith, "vel favore, vel timore regio."—ii. 5.

panions had borne fruit beyond all expectation; so much so, that at the festival of Christmas in the same year, 597, more than 10,000 Anglo-Saxons presented themselves for baptism; and that sacrament was administered to them in the Thames at the mouth of the Medway, opposite that Isle of Sheppey, where is now situated one of the principal stations of the British fleet, and one of the grand centres of the maritime power of Great Britain.[1]

The king's palace converted into a monastic cathedral.

The first of the converts was also the first of the benefactors of the infant Church. Ethelbert, more and more imbued with respect and devotion for the faith which he had embraced, desired to give a notable pledge of his pious humility, by transferring to the new archbishop his own palace in the town of Canterbury, and establishing henceforth his royal residence at Reculver, an ancient Roman fortress on the adjacent shore of the island on which Augustin had landed. Beside the dwelling of the king thus transformed into a monastery for the archbishop and his monks, and on the site of an old church of the time of the Romans, a basilica which was hereafter to become, under the name of Christchurch, the metropolitan church of England, was commenced. Of this church Augustin was at once the first archbishop and the first abbot.[2]

The Pope had at first designed, as the seat of

[1] S. Gregor., *Epist.*, viii. 30. Stanley, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[2] The immense Cathedral of Canterbury, the reconstruction of which was begun by Lanfranc in the eleventh century, occupies the site of this earlier church and of the palace of Ethelbert.

the new metropolis, the city of London, a Roman colony already famous from the time of the Emperors; whereas he had, perhaps, never heard the name of the residence of the Saxon kings at Canterbury. But London was not within the kingdom of Ethelbert, and the selection of the Pope could not prevail against the motives which determined Augustin to choose, as the head and centre of the religious life of England, the capital of the king who had become his proselyte and his friend, standing, as it did, in the region where he had first landed on British soil, and whose inhabitants had welcomed him with such genial sympathy.[1]

Abbey of St Augustin at Canterbury.

But the splendours and the influence of the official metropolis were for long ages to be eclipsed, in the opinion of the English people, and of the Christian world, by another foundation, equally owing its origin to Augustin and Ethelbert, the first archbishop and the first Christian king of England. To the west of the royal city, and halfway to that Church of St Martin whither the queen went to pray, and where the king had been baptised, Augustin, always on the outlook for any traces which the old faith had left in Britain, discovered the site of a church which had been transformed into a pagan temple, and encircled with a sacred wood. Ethelbert gave up to him the temple, with all the ground surrounding it. The

[1] Gregor., *Epist.*, xi. 65. Willelm. Malmesburiensis, *De Gest. Reg.*, i. c. 4, and *De Dorobernensibus Episcopis*, p. 111.

archbishop forthwith restored it to its original use as a church, and dedicated it to St Pancras, a young Roman martyr, whose memory was dear to the Italian monks, because the Monastery of Mount Cœlius, whence they had all come, and where their father Gregory was born, had been built upon lands formerly belonging to his family. Round this new sanctuary Augustin raised another monastery, of which Peter, one of his companions, was the first abbot, and which he intended to be the place of his own burial, after the Roman custom which placed the cemeteries out of the towns, and by the side of the highroads. He consecrated this new foundation in the names of the apostles of Rome, Peter and Paul; but it was under his own name that this famous abbey became one of the most opulent and most revered sanctuaries of Christendom. It was for several centuries the burying-place of the kings and primates of England,[1] and

[1] Ecclesiastical historians abound in testimonies of admiration for this immense house, whose patrimony extended to 11,860 acres of land, and whose façade was 250 feet long. Perhaps one could read on that façade these verses quoted by a chronicler, and which recall the inscription on the front of St John Lateran at Rome:—

"Hoc caput Anglorum datur esse monasteriorum
Regum cunctorum fons pontificumque sacrorum."

The abbot of St Augustin of Canterbury received from Pope Leo IX. in 1055, the privilege of sitting in the first place after the abbot of Mount Cassino, in the general councils. The *Monasticon Anglicanum* of Dugdale, vol. i. p. 23, gives a very curious view of the state of the ruins of this abbey, towards the middle of the seventeenth century; a great tower, called Ethelbert's, but built much later than his time, can still be distinguished. In the *Vestiges of Antiquities at Canterbury*, by T. Hastings, 1813, folio, there are plates representing in great detail the remains,

at the same time the first and brightest centre of religious and intellectual life in the south of Great Britain.

Seven years were needed to complete the monastery, the church attached to which could not even be dedicated during the lifetime of him whose name it was to assume and preserve. But some months before his death, Augustin had the satisfaction of seeing the foundation of the first Benedictine monastery in England sanctioned by the solemn ratification of the king and the chiefs of the nation whom he had converted.

The charter of this monastery has been brought to light in our day as the oldest authentic record of the religious and political history of England.[1] Our readers will thank us for quoting the text and the signatures of the witnesses. The Anglo-Saxon king appears in this transaction at once as a Christian prince and as the chief of the aristocratic 9th Jan. 605.

still considerable, but cruelly profaned and neglected, which existed in 1812—the best preserved portion used as a brewery, and beside it a tavern with an enclosure used for cock-fights. It has been restored recently, to a certain extent, thanks to the munificence of Mr Beresford Hope, and is used at present as a seminary for the Anglican missions. The house has had several historians, among others William Thorne (*de Spina*), who was abbot about 1358, and chiefly Thomas de Elmham, treasurer of the monastery in 1407, whose chronicle was edited by Mr Hardwick in 1858, for the collection of *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Ævi Scriptores.*

[1] The authenticity of this deed has been admitted by one of the most learned and competent critics of our day, Sir Francis Palgrave, *Rise and Progress of the British Commonwealth*, vol. ii. p. 215-18. Kemble, again, in his *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici*, vol. i. p. 2, has published it with the asterisk which marks documents suspected or false; but he nowhere enters into any justification of this sentence.

assembly whose consent was necessary to the validity of all his deeds.[1] He begins thus:—

"I, Ethelbert, king of Kent, with the consent of the venerable archbishop Augustin, and of my nobles, give and concede to God, in honour of St Peter, a certain portion of the land which is mine by right, and which lies to the east of the town of Canterbury, to the end that a monastery may be built thereon, and that the properties hereinafter named may be in full possession of him who shall be appointed abbot thereof. Wherefore I swear and ordain, in the name of Almighty God, who is the just and sovereign judge, that the land thus given is given for ever—that it shall not be lawful either for me or for my successors to take any part of it whatsoever from its possessors; and if any one attempt to lessen or to annul our gift, that he be in this life deprived of the holy communion of the body and blood of Christ, and at the day of judgment cut off from the company of the saints.

"† I, Ethelbert, king of the English, have confirmed this gift, by my own hand, with the sign of the holy cross.

"† I, Augustin, by the grace of God archbishop, have freely subscribed.

"† I, Eadbald, son of the king, have adhered.

[1] "Convocato ibidem concilio communi, tam cleri quam populi, omnium et singulorum approbatione et consensu, monasterium . . . monachis hic perpetuo Deo servituris . . . cum dotatione, confirmatione ac perpetua libertate donavit."—ELMHAM, p. 111.

"† I, Hamigisile, duke, have approved.
"† I, Hocca, earl, have consented.
"† I, Angemundus, referendary, have approved.
"† I, Graphio, earl, have said it is well.
"† I, Tangisile, *regis optimas*, have confirmed.
"† I, Pinca, have consented.
"† I, Geddi, have corroborated." [1]

[1] "Ego Ethelbertus, rex Cantiæ, cum consensu venerabilis archiepiscopi Augustini," &c.—KEMBLE, *loc. cit.* The deeds of gift executed by the Anglo-Saxon kings always announce the consent *ducum, comitum, optimatumque*, and are always signed by the counts and principal lords, or by the bishops and abbots; the formula *Favi*, or *consensi*, or *approbavi*, often accompanies the proper name, which is always preceded by a cross: †. This cross did not occupy the place of the signature, as has been represented, nor did it at all indicate that the subscriber could not write. Kemble, in a note to his preface, p. 91, seems to indicate that the two signatures of Angemundus and Graphio, with the accompanying qualifications, warrant him in ranking the whole deed in the list of apocryphal documents. Palgrave gives, after Somner's *Canterbury*, p. 47, another text with the same title, where the signatures, arranged in the same order, are not accompanied with any qualification. He proves elsewhere, p. 214, that the most disputed of the Anglo-Saxon documents have almost always some authentic deeds as their basis, the original authenticity of which ought not to be called in question on account of real or apparent anachronisms resulting from subsequent amplifications or alterations. Almost all the Anglo-Saxon deeds that we can still read are strongly confirmed, according to him, by what he calls their internal evidence. These charters rest on history, which in its turn rests on them; each thus confirming the other.

CHAPTER II.

HOW POPE GREGORY AND BISHOP AUGUSTIN GOVERNED THE NEW CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Joy of Gregory on learning the success of the monks.—His letters to Augustin; to the patriarch of Alexandria; to Queen Bertha.—A new monastic colony sent out.—Letter to the king.—Advice to Augustin regarding his miracles.—Opinion of Burke.—Answer of Gregory to the questions of Augustin.—The Pope's arrangements for the heathen; his admirable moderation.—Supremacy over the British bishops accorded to Augustin.—Opposition of the Welsh Celts.—Nature of the dissensions which separated the British from the Roman Church.—Celebration of Easter.—Origin and insignificance of the religious dispute.—It is increased and complicated by patriotic antipathy to the Saxons.—First conference between Augustin and the British.—Miracle of the blind man.—Second conference; rupture.—The abbot of Bangor.—Augustin's threatening prediction concerning the monks of Bangor fulfilled by the fierce Ethelfrid of Northumbria.—Sequel of Augustin's mission.—He is insulted by the fishermen of Dorsetshire.—Foundation of King Ethelbert.—Bishops of London and of Rochester.—Laws of Ethelbert; the first reduced to writing.—Guarantee given to the Church property.—Death of Gregory and Augustin.

Joy of St Gregory on learning the success of his monks.

SOME time before this solemn national consecration of his work, and after the first year of his mission, Augustin had sent to Rome two of his companions—Lawrence, who was to succeed him as archbishop, and Peter, who was to be the first abbot of the new monastery of St Peter and St Paul—to announce to the Pope the great and good news of

the conversion of the king, with his kingdom of Kent; next, to demand from him new assistants in the work, the harvest being great and the labourers but few; and, lastly, to consult him on eleven important and delicate points touching the discipline and the management of the new Church.

The joy of Gregory when, in the midst of the perils and trials of the Church, and of his own sufferings, material and moral, he saw the realisation of his soul's most cherished dream, may be understood. The boldest of his projects was crowned with success. A new people had been brought into the fold of the Church through his gentle but persevering activity. Till the end of the world, innumerable souls would owe to him their admission to the great brotherhood of souls here below—to the eternal joys that are above. He could not foresee the great men, the famous saints, the immense resources, the dauntless champions, that England was to furnish to the Catholic Church; but neither had he the sorrow of foreknowing the sad revolt which was yet to rob so much glory of its lustre, nor that base ingratitude which has dared to despise or to underrate, in his case as in that of his subordinates, the incomparable blessings which he conferred on the people of England by sending to them the light of the Gospel.

The joy of Gregory, as pure as it was natural, infused its spirit into that vast correspondence in which he has left us so faithful an image of his mind

and of his life. To Augustin, as might have been expected, its first overflow was directed. "Glory be to God in the highest," he writes—"glory to that God who would not reign alone in heaven, whose death is our life, whose weakness is our strength, whose suffering cures our sufferings, whose love sends us to seek even in the island of Britain for brothers whom we knew not, whose goodness causes us to find those whom we sought for while yet we knew them not![1] Who can express the exultation of all faithful hearts, now that the English nation, through the grace of God and thy brotherly labour, is illumined by the Divine light, and tramples under foot the idols which it ignorantly worshipped, in order that it may now bow down before the true God?" He then hastened to re-echo into the East the happy news which had reached him from the extreme West. He writes to the patriarch of Alexandria: "The bearer of your letters found me sick and leaves me sick. But God grants to me gladness of heart to temper the bitterness of my bodily sufferings.[2] The flock of the holy Church grows and multiplies; the spiritual harvests gather in the heavenly garners. . . . You announced to me the conversion of your heretics—the concord of your faithful people. . . . I make

[1] "Ne solus regnaret in cœlo, cujus morte vivimus, cujus infirmitate roboramur, cujus passione a passione eripimur, cujus amore in Britannia fratres quærimus quos ignorabamus"—*Epist.*, xi. 28.

[2] "Ægrum me reperit, ægrum reliquit . . . quatenus mentis lætitia immanitatem meæ molestiæ temperaret."—*Epist.*, viii. 30, ad Eulogium.

you a return in kind, because I know you will rejoice in my joy, and that you have aided me with your prayers. Know, then, that the nation of the Angles, situated at the extremest *angle* of the world,[1] had till now continued in idolatry, worshipping stocks and stones. God inspired me to send thither a monk of my monastery here, to preach the Gospel to them. This monk, whom I caused to be ordained bishop by the Frankish bishops, has penetrated to this nation at the uttermost ends of the earth; and I have now received tidings of the happy success of his enterprise. He and his companions have wrought miracles that seem to come near to those of the apostles themselves, and more than 10,000 English have been baptised by them at one time."

After having thus quickened the zeal of the Egyptian patriarch by these tidings from England, he turns to the queen of the newly converted nation—Bertha, born a Christian, and the granddaughter of a saint—to congratulate her on the conversion to her own faith of her husband and her people, and to encourage her to new efforts by telling her that she was remembered in the prayers of the faithful, not only at Rome, but at Constantinople, and that the fame of her good works had reached the ears of the most serene Emperor himself. "Our very dear sons, Lawrence the priest

[1] "Gens *Anglorum*, in mundi *angulo* posita suo."—*Epist.*, viii. 30, ad Eulogium. Always this singular taste for puns!

and Peter the monk," he writes to her, "have rehearsed to me, on their arrival here, all that your Majesty has done for our reverend brother and cobishop Augustin—all the comfort and the charity that you have so liberally bestowed on him. We bless the Almighty, who has seen meet to reserve for you the conversion of the English nation. Even as He found in the glorious Helena, mother of the most pious Constantine, an instrument to win over the hearts of the Romans to the Christian faith, so we feel assured will His mercy, through your agency, work out the salvation of the English. Already, for a long time, it must have been your endeavour to turn, with the prudence of a true Christian, the heart of your husband towards the faith which you profess, for his own wellbeing and for that of his kingdom. Well-instructed and pious as you are, this duty should not have been to you either tedious or difficult. If you have in any wise neglected it, you must redeem the lost time. Strengthen in the mind of your noble husband his devotion to the Christian faith; pour into his heart the love of God; inflame him with zeal for the complete conversion of his subjects, so that he may make an offering to Almighty God by your love and your devotion. I pray God that the completion of your work may make the angels in heaven feel the same joy which I already owe to you on earth."[1]

[1] "Qualis erga R. fratrem . . . gloria vestra exstiterit, quantaque illi solatia vel qualem charitatem impenderit, retulerunt. . . . Postquam

About the same time, in revising his commentaries on the Scriptures, and his Exposition of the Book of Job, he cannot help adding then this cry of triumph: "Look at that Britain whose tongue has uttered only savage sounds, but now echoes the Hallelujah of the Hebrews! Behold that furious sea—it gently smoothes itself beneath the feet of the saints! These savage clans, that the princes of the earth could not subdue by the sword—see them enchained by the simple word of the priests! That people which, while yet pagan, defied undauntedly the arms and the renown of our soldiers, trembles at the speech of the humble and weak. It knows fear now, but it is the fear of sin; and all its desires are centred on the glory everlasting."[1]

A new monastic colony sent over.

Far, however, from resting indolently in this joy, he remained to his latest day faithful to the warm and active interest with which his beloved England had inspired him.[2] He sent to Augustin a new

et recta fide gloria vestra munita et litteris docta est, hoc vobis nec tardum nec debuit esse difficile."—*Epist.*, v. 29. It will be observed that this letter is placed in the catalogue of the pontifical correspondence apart from the other letters which Gregory addressed to the husband of Bertha, as well as to the princes and bishops, in order to recommend to them the new assistants of Augustin.

[1] "Ecce lingua Britanniæ quæ nil aliud noverat quam barbarum frendere, jamdudum in divinis laudibus Hebræum cœpit alleluia sonare. Ecce tumidus quondam, jam substratus pedibus sanctorum, servit Oceanus. . . . Qui catervas pugnantium infidelis nequaquam metuerat, jam nunc fidelis humilium linguam timet . . . ut prave agere metuat ac totis desideriis ad æternitatis gloriam pervenire concupiscat."—S. Greg., *Moral.*, book xxviii. c. 11.

[2] "Semper pro amatis Anglis vigilantissimus."—Gotselinus, *Hist. Maior*, c. 24.

monastic colony, provided with relics, sacred vessels, priestly robes, the ornaments of the altar, and all that was necessary to give effect to the pomp of religious service. He sent also books, which were intended to form the nucleus of an ecclesiastical library.[1]

22d June 601. At the head of this new swarm of monks was a man of noble birth, by name Mellitus, and his companion Justus, who were to succeed each other on the metropolitan throne of Canterbury, and with them Paulinus, the future apostle of Northumbria. The Pope provided them with very urgent letters, all of the same date, for Queen Brunehaut, for her grandsons, kings Theodebert and Theodoric; for their rival king Clotaire of Neustria,[2] who had treated Augustin with great kindness, and heartily seconded his enterprise; and for the bishops of Arles, Lyons, Gap, Toulon, Marseilles, Châlons, Paris, Rouen, and Angers—thus marking beforehand the possible halting-places of the new missionaries.[3]

[1] "Nec non et codices plurimos."—BEDE, i. 29. Many of the books sent to Augustin by the hands of the abbot Peter were carefully preserved, and escaped the ravages of time for six centuries. In the days of Henry VIII. Leland still speaks of them with admiration: "Majusculis literis Romanis more veterum scriptis . . . incredibilem præ se ferentes antiquitatis majestatem." An old catalogue of this first consignment of books ends with these words: "This is the origin of the library of the whole English Church."—A.D. 601. In the library of the college of Corpus Christi, at Cambridge, a Latin MS. of the four evangelists is preserved, which, according to an old tradition, is the copy brought from Rome by St Augustin in 596.

[2] *Epist.*, xi. 61, ad Clotarium Francorum regem.

[3] *Epist.*, xi. 54-62. Compare BEDE, i. 29.

In a special letter to Virgilius, the legate at Arles, he recommends him most particularly to receive their common brother, Augustin, with the greatest affection, in the event of his visiting him; and he adds: "As it often happens that those who are at a distance need to be made aware of disorders which require to be repressed, if he should inform you of faults on the part of his priests or others, examine everything along with him with the minutest care, and act with the greatest strictness, but ever be heedful that you do not let the innocent suffer with the guilty."[1]

The passionate yet intelligent and impartial tenderness towards his friends, which is one of the most attractive features in Gregory's admirable character, is nowhere more beautifully displayed than in his relations with Augustin. We see him ever engaged in extending and consolidating the authority of his envoy; but not the less anxious for the welfare of his soul, and resolute to give precedence before all else to the interests of the newly Christianised country. He intrusted to the new missionaries a long letter addressed to King Ethelbert, in which, while congratulating him on his conversion, and comparing him to Constantine, as he had compared Bertha to St Helena, he exhorted him to spread the faith among his subjects—to for-

[1] "Si communem fratrem Augustinum episcopum ad vos venire contigerit, ita illum dilectio vestra, sicut decet, affectuose dulciterque suscipiat, ut et ipsum consolationis suæ bono refoveat, et alios, qualiter fraterna charitas colenda sit, doceat."—*Epist.*, xi. 68.

bid the worship of idols, to overthrow their temples, and to establish good morals by exhortations, kindnesses, and threats, but above all by his own example. He adds: "You have with you our very reverend brother, bishop Augustin, trained according to the monastic rule, full of the knowledge of the Scriptures, abounding in good works in the sight of God. Hearken devoutly to him, and faithfully accomplish all that he tells you; for the more you listen to what he will tell you on the part of God, the more will God grant his prayers when he prays to Him on your behalf. Attach yourself, then, to him with all the strength of your mind, and all the fervour of faith; and second his efforts with all the force that God has given you."[1]

The same day, in a public letter, he confers on Augustin the right of bearing the *pallium* in celebrating mass, as a reward for having established the new English Church. This honour was to descend to all his successors on the archiepiscopal throne.[2] He constitutes him metropolitan of twelve bishopries, which he enjoins him to erect in south-

[1] "Fanorum ædificia everte, subditorum mores ex magna vitæ munditia, exhortando, terrendo, blandiendo, corrigendo et boni operis exempla monstrando, ædifica. . . . Augustinus episcopus, in monasterii regula edoctus."—*Epist.*, xi. 66. It is surprising to find in this beautiful letter a paragraph warning the Saxon king that the end of the world is at hand—that he must watch for it day by day, and not be astonished, seeing that it is near, at marvellous things which are about to happen in England as elsewhere.

[2] Since the schism of Henry VIII., the Anglican archbishops of Canterbury, by the strangest of anomalies, have still preserved this *pallium* in the arms of their see.

ern England. He gives him authority to appoint whom he will metropolitan bishop in the ancient Roman and episcopal city of York, subordinating to the see of York twelve new bishoprics yet to be erected, but reserving to Augustin during his lifetime the supremacy over the northern metropolitan. Over and above all the bishops to be ordained by him or by the future bishop of York in the conquered territory, Gregory places under the jurisdiction of Augustin all the bishops of Britain, "in order," says the Pope, "that they may learn by your word and by your life how they must believe, and how they must live, in order to fulfil their office and gain an inheritance in heaven."[1] He here treats of the bishops who were established in Wales, or who had fled thither for refuge—the prelates and teachers of the Christian Celtic populations which had escaped the Saxon yoke.

But while he thus openly evidenced the fulness of his confidence and the authority with which he invested Augustin, he addressed to him, in secret, advices meant to preserve him from the dangerous snare of pride. "In our joy," he wrote, "there is much to fear. I know, beloved brother, that God has by thee wrought great miracles in this nation. It is right to rejoice that the minds of the English are drawn by visible miracles to

1 "Quatenus ex lingua et vita tuæ sanctitatis, et recte credendi et bene vivendi formam percipiant, atque officium fide ac moribus exsequentes, ad cœlestia, cum Dominus voluerit, regna pertingant."—*Epist.*, xi. 65.

the invisible grace; but we ought to fear lest these prodigies incline the weak mind to presumption, and make the inner man fall to a worse depth through vainglory than he is raised up outwardly. When the disciples said to their divine Master, 'Lord, in thy name even the devils are subject unto us,' he answered them, 'Rejoice not because the devils are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.' The names of all the elect are written there, and yet all the elect work not miracles. And while God thus acts outwardly by thee, thou oughtest, brother beloved, to judge thyself scrupulously within, and to know well what thou art. If thou rememberest that thou hast offended God by word or deed, have thy faults ever present to thy memory to repress the vainglory which may rise in thy heart. Reflect that this gift of miracles is not given to thee for thyself, but for those whose salvation is committed to thee. The reprobate have wrought miracles; and we, we know not even if we are among the elect. It is needful, then, sternly to humble and subdue the mind in the midst of all these prodigies and signs, lest it should seek in them only its own glory and its private advantage. God has given us but one sign whereby we may know his elect: it is this, that we have love one to another." [1]

[1] Fleury, in quoting this letter, says with justice, "Nothing proves more completely the truth of St Augustin's miracles than these serious counsels of Gregory."

Immediately after, to reassure the friend whom he had thus corrected, by a return to his wonted tenderness and sympathy, he continues in these terms: "I speak thus because I desire to subdue to humility the soul of my dear hearer. But let even thy humility have confidence. All sinful as I am, I have a sure hope that all thy sins will be remitted unto thee, inasmuch as thou hast been chosen to bring to others the remission of their sins. If there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance, what joy must not there be over a great nation which, in coming to the true faith, repents of all the evil it has done! And it is thou who hast given this joy to heaven."[1]

In one of Gregory's former letters, addressed, not to Augustin, but to his friend Eulogius, patriarch of Alexandria, the Pope also refers to the miracles which had signalised the mission of Augustin; he does not hesitate even to compare them to the signs and wonders which accompanied the preaching of the apostles.[2] Twelve centuries after Gregory, the greatest genius that modern England has produced, the immortal Burke, bows respectfully before that tradition, misunderstood by his frivol-

[1] "Hæc autem dico quia auditoris mei animum in humilitate sternere cupio. Sed ipsa tua humilitas habeat fiduciam suam. Nam peccator ego spem certissimam teneo."—*Epist.*, xi. 28.

[2] "Tantis miraculis vel ipse vel hi qui cum ipso transmissi sunt in gente eadem coruscant, ut apostolorum virtutes in signis, quæ perhibent, imitari videantur."—*Epist.*, viii. 30.

ous contemporaries. The introduction of Christianity into any country whatsoever is, according to him, the most inestimable benefit that can be conferred on humanity. Why, then, in view of an end so worthy, should not Providence itself sometimes directly interpose? Miracles, of old time accepted with a blind credulity, have been since rejected with "as undistinguishing a disregard." "But," adds the great orator, "it is the reality or opinion of such miracles that was the principal cause of the early acceptance and rapid progress of Christianity in this island."[1] It is singular that neither Bede nor any other historian gives the least detail of these wonders which awoke at once the admiration, the gratitude, and the prudent deprecations of St Gregory the Great. But of all possible miracles, the greatest is assuredly "to have detached from paganism without violence a violent people; to have introduced it into the Christian commonwealth, not man by man, and family by family, but at one stroke, with its kings, its warlike nobility, and all its institutions."[2] This king, who believes himself descended from the gods of the Scandinavian paradise, yet who resigns his capital to the priests of the crucified God; this people, fierce and idolatrous, which by thousands prostrates itself at the feet of a few foreign monks,

[1] BURKE, *Essay towards an Abridgment of English History*, book ii. ch. 1.

[2] OZANAM, p. 159.

and by thousands plunges into the icy waters of the Thames, in mid winter, to receive baptism from these unknown strangers; this rapid and complete transformation of a proud and victorious, and at the same time sensual and rapacious race, by means of a doctrine pre-eminently fitted to quell lust, pride, and sensuality, and which, once received into these savage hearts, rests for ever implanted there,—is not this, of all miracles, the most marvellous, as it is the most indisputable?

Answer of Gregory to the questions of Augustin: true law of Catholic missions.

Finally, after all these letters, Gregory wrote a very long and very detailed answer to the eleven questions which Augustin had put to him, as to the principal difficulties which he had encountered, or which he foresaw might still be met with in the course of his mission. To convey a just idea of this reply, which is an admirable monument of enlightenment, of conciliatory reason, of gentleness, wisdom, moderation, and prudence, and which was destined to become, as has been most justly said, the rule and the code of Christian missions,[1] it would have to be quoted entire; but besides its extreme length, it embraces certain details from which our modern prudery recoils. Here, however, is the substance of its most important passages.

The Pope, consulted as to the use and the division to be made of the offerings of the faithful, reminds Augustin that the revenues of the Church should

[1] Ozanam, *Civilisation Chrétienne chez les Francs*, p. 154.

be divided into four portions: the first for the bishop and his family, because of the hospitality which he ought to exercise; the second for the clergy; the third for the poor; the fourth for the maintenance and repair of churches. "But you," he says to the archbishop—"you who have been brought up in monastic discipline, ought not to live apart from your clergy, but to initiate in the new English Church the life in common which our fathers practised in the primitive Church."[1]

Why, asked Augustin, are there divers customs in the Church, when the faith is one? and why does the liturgy according to which the mass is celebrated in the churches of Gaul (which Bertha probably followed in her oratory of St Martin), differ from that of the Roman Church?

"You, my brother," replies the Pope, "know the usage of the Roman Church, in which you cannot forget that you were brought up. But if it should happen that you find in the Church of Rome, or in that of Gaul, or in any other, some usage which you believe to be more pleasing to God, I enjoin you to select it with care, and give it a place in the new Church of England. For institutions are not to be loved because of the places whence they are derived; but rather are places to be beloved for the sake of the good institutions that exist

[1] "Interrogatio beati Augustini episcopi Cantuariorum Ecclesiæ. . . . Respondit Gregorius papa urbis Romæ, . . . Tua fraternitas monasterii, regulis erudita, seorsum vivere non debet a clericis suis."—BEDE, i. 27. GREG., *Epist.*, xi. 64.

therein. Choose therefore among the Churches all that is pious and reasonable, and out of what you thus collect form the use of the English Church." [1]

In these words it is easy to recognise the pontiff who had already braved the criticisms of some petty spirits, by introducing at Rome various usages that were believed to be borrowed from Constantinople, and who had said to his critics, "I shall be always ready to deter my subordinates from evil, but to imitate them in good, borrowing it from it matters not what Church. He is but a fool who could make his primacy a reason for disdaining to learn whatever good can be learnt." [2]

Consulted as to the punishment to be inflicted on sacrilegious robbers, and as to the administration of the Roman law, which imposed on the robber a double or fourfold restitution, Gregory advises that, in the punishment, the poverty or the riches of the depredator be taken into account;

[1] "Novit fraternitas tua Romanæ Ecclesiæ consuetudinem in qua se meminit eruditam. Sed mihi placet, sive in Romana, sive Galliarum, seu in qualibet Ecclesia, aliquid invenisti quod plus omnipotenti Deo possit placere, sollicite eligas, et in Anglorum Ecclesiæ quæ adhuc ad fidem nova est, institutione præcipua, quæ de multis Ecclesiis colligere potuisti, infundas. Non enim pro locis res, sed pro bonis rebus loci amandi sunt. Ex singulis ergo quibusque Ecclesiis quæ pia, quæ religiosa, quæ recta sunt, elige : et hæc quasi in fasciculum collecta, apud Anglorum mentes in consuetudinem depone."

[2] "Si quid boni vel ipsa vel altera Ecclesia habet, ego et minores meos quos ab illicitis prohibeo in bono imitari paratus sum. Stultus est enim qui in eo se primum existimat, ut bona quæ viderit discere contemnat." —*Epist.*, x. 12, ad Joann., Syracus. Episc.

and that it be administered always with a fatherly love and a moderation which shall keep the mind within the limits of reason. As to restitution—"God forbid," said he, "that the Church should seek to gain by what she has lost, and to draw a profit from the folly of men."[1]

Augustin had further inquired what rule he should follow in regard to marriages within the forbidden degrees, to the duties of the married state, and how much ought to be retained of the purifications prescribed to women by the Mosaic law. Gregory, in reply, interdicts absolutely marriages between mothers-in-law and sons-in-law, which were common among the Saxons; as also between brothers and sisters-in-law. But, for the latter case, he does not require that converts, who had contracted such marriages before their conversion, should be deprived of the holy communion, "lest," he says, "you should appear to punish them for what they have done in mere ignorance; for there are things which the Church corrects with strictness, and there are others which, for kindness' sake, she tolerates, or prudently overlooks; but always in such wise as to restrain the evil which she bears with, or winks at." He would, in general, treat the English as St Paul treated his converts—nourishing them not on solid food, but with milk,

[1] "Ita ut mens extra rationis regulam omnino nihil faciat. . . . Absit ut Ecclesia cum augmento recipiat quod de terrenis rebus videtur amittere, et lucra de vanis quærere."

as newborn babes. Further on "he prescribes to the marriage bed these severe laws which secure health and vigour and the fruitfulness of the Christian family."[1] He does not permit that the woman who has just borne a child should be excluded from the Church, and that thus her suffering should be made a crime.

But he protests with energy against the unnatural custom of mothers who will not be nurses, and who disdain to suckle the children they have brought forth. He sought thus to impress upon the heart of the Saxon woman all a wife's duties, while at the same time he marked her proper place in the Christian family by exalting her dignity and protecting her modesty.[2]

New concessions of Gregory in a letter to the Abbot Mellitus.

Reflection only served to confirm the Pope in this wise and generous indulgence towards the new converts, allied, as it was in him, with a zeal at once pure and ardent for the service and progress of the truth. Scarce had he addressed to Ethelbert the letter in which he exhorted him to destroy the temples of the ancient national worship, when he reconsidered the matter, and a few days

[1] Ozanam, *op. cit.*, 161.

[2] "In hoc enim tempore sancta Ecclesia quædam per fervorem corrigit, quædam per mansuetudinem tolerat, quædam per considerationem dissimulat, atque ita portat et dissimulat, ut sæpe malum quod adversatur portando et dissimulando compescat. . . . Si enixam mulierem prohibemus ecclesiam intrare, ipsam ei pœnam suam in culpam deputamus. . . . Prava autem in conjugatorum moribus consuetudo surrexit, ut mulieres . . . dum se continere nolunt, despiciunt lactare quos gignunt."—*Ibid.* Compare *Epist.* xiv. 17, ad Felicem Messanensem Episcopum.

later despatched entirely different instructions to Mellitus, the chief of the new mission, whom he had designated abbot, and to whom he had intrusted the letter for the king—hoping to overtake him on his journey. "Since your departure and that of your company," he writes, "I have been much disquieted, for I have learnt nothing of the success of your journey. But when Almighty God shall have carried you in safety to our most reverend brother Augustin, say to him that, after having long revolved in my own mind the affairs of the English, I have come to the conclusion that it is not necessary to overthrow all the temples of the idols, but only the idols that are in them. After having sprinkled these temples with holy water, let altars and relics be placed in them; for if they are strongly built, it were well that they were made to pass from the worship of demons to the service of the true God—to the end that the people, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may the more readily accept the religious change and come to adore God in the places familiar to them. And as it is their custom to slay many oxen in sacrifices to the demons, some solemnity which should take the place of this sacrifice must be established. On the day of the dedication, or on the feast of the martyrs whose relics may be given to them, they may be permitted to make huts of leaves around the temples thus changed into churches, and celebrate the feast

with social repasts. But in place of sacrificing beasts to a demon, they will kill them only to be eaten with thankfulness to God who provides their food; and thus, by leaving to them some of the enjoyments of the senses, they will be more easily led to desire the joys of the soul. For it is impossible to change all at once the whole habits of the savage mind: a mountain is not climbed by leaps and bounds, but step by step." [1]

Among the enemies of the Roman Church, pedants and hypercritics are found to accuse St Gregory of having compromised matters with his conscience in thus opening the entrance of the sanctuary to paganism. Far from sympathising with them, let us, on the contrary, learn to admire the great and wise teacher who could so well distinguish the essential from the accidental, and who, repudiating the pretensions of minute and vexatious uniformity, and sacrificing the pettiness of prejudice to the majesty of a great design, could thus develop the worship of the truth even among the superstitions of Germanic paganism. Let us admire, above all, "a religion which penetrates thus to the depths of human nature—which knows what needful combats against his passions it de-

[1] "Post discessum congregationis vestræ quæ tecum est, valde sumus suspensi redditi, quia nihil de prosperitate vestri itineris audisse nos contigit. . . . Dicite ei quid diu mecum de causa Anglorum cogitans tractavi. . . . Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscidere impossibile esse non dubium est, quia et is qui summum locum ascendere nitetur, gradibus vel passibus, non saltibus elevatur."—*Epist.*, xi. 76.

mands from man, and which has no desire to impose unnecessary sacrifices upon him. The only way of knowing human nature is to love it, and it can be won only at this price."[1]

Supremacy accorded to Augustin over the British bishops.

In his last question Augustin had asked how he—as yet the only bishop among the English—should deal by the bishops of Gaul and Britain. Gregory admonishes him not to keep at a distance the bishops of Gaul who might wish to be present at his ordinations of new bishops in England, "for to conduct successfully spiritual affairs it is lawful to draw lessons from temporal affairs; and as, in the world, persons already married are invited together to take part in the festivities of a wedding, so nothing forbids the participation of bishops already ordained in that ordination which is the espousal of man with God." The Pope added: "We do not assign to you any authority over the bishops of Gaul, and you can reform them only through persuasion and good example, except at the risk of thrusting your sickle into another's harvest. As to the British bishops, we commit them entirely to your care, that you may instruct the ignorant, strengthen the feeble, and correct the evil."[2]

Gregory, who knew so well how to read the hearts and win the minds of men, could have only

[1] OZANAM, *Œuvres*, i. 167.

[2] "Nam in ipsis rebus spiritualibus ut sapienter et mature disponantur, exemplum trahere a rebus etiam carnalibus possumus. . . . Britannorum omnes episcopos tuæ fraternitati committimus."—*Epist.*, xi. 64.

a very imperfect knowledge of the geography as well as of the political condition of Great Britain. He seems to have held on that subject the antiquated notions which prevailed at Rome regarding an island which had been the first to escape from the imperial yoke. He evidently had no idea of the national and only too legitimate antipathy which inflamed the Christian Britons against the heathen Saxons, who had for a century and a half overrun, ravaged, and usurped their country. He imagined that those Christians, always faithfully united to the Roman Church, who had so energetically repudiated Pelagianism, and whose bishops had sat in the ancient councils presided over by the legates of Rome, would lend a cordial support to the mission of the Roman monks, commissioned by him to evangelise the Saxons. He did not know the implacable hate of the conquered for the conquerors; and he forgot certain points of difference which, though they did not touch the great verities of the Christian faith, and were completely removed from all idea of a national or schismatic Church, raised, nevertheless, a formidable barrier between the British clergy and his Roman missionaries.

Augustin at issue with the Celtic bishop

It is evident that Augustin always showed himself capable of understanding and applying the precepts of his friend and master. No incident of his life, recorded in his history, indicates any opposition to, or departure from, the rules laid down for him

by the prudence and charity of Gregory. He was faithful to these rules in his relations with the British bishops placed by the Pope under his jurisdiction, as well as in all other respects. A rapid survey of this conflict will even lead the reader to protest against the unjust and calumnious accusations of which it has been the object, and will prove that Augustin was exclusively guided by a natural desire to put an end to dissensions which impaired the unity of the efforts necessary for the conversion of the Saxons.

Wherein, then, consisted those differences between Rome and the Celtic Christianity of Wales, of Ireland, and of Caledonia, which occupy so prominent a place in the religious history of the sixth and seventh centuries, and which the irritable and haughty zeal of St Columbanus carried over into France, and with which he tried the patience of St Gregory;[1] while Augustin, on his side, found in them the chief stumblingblock to his mission in Great Britain? It cannot be too often repeated, that they affected none of the essential doctrines of Christianity, no article of faith defined by the Church either before or since that period, no question of morals, and, above all, that they did not offer any opposition to the supremacy of the Holy See, as it was then exercised or accepted by the rest of the Christian world.

Modern research has finally dispersed all the imaginary chimeras of certain English and German

[1] See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 408.

writers who attributed these differences to a pretended influence of Eastern Christianity on the British Churches, of which no authentic trace exists; or more readily still, to a traditional repugnance on the part of the Celtic population to the yoke of Rome—a repugnance belied by the history of the past, as well as by the living testimony of the races, the most tenacious and most illustrious members of which, the Irish and the Armoricans, have purchased, at the cost of the most generous and cruel sacrifices, the right of placing themselves in the foremost rank of the faithful children of the Church of Rome.[1]

The dissension regarding Easter.

The principal difference turned on the question of the date of the festival of Easter. This nice question—the bugbear of all who embark on the study of the primitive annals of the Church—has already emerged in the course of our history, and will often again recur.[2]

From the earliest Christian ages prolonged discussions were raised regarding the day on which the greatest festival of the Church should be celebrated. The Council of Nice fixed the date of

[1] The most weighty writers of Protestant Germany in our day, such as Gieseler and Schrœdl, have already abandoned this hypothesis, so long accepted by their co-religionists. It has been learnedly refuted by the illustrious Professor Döllinger in his *Manual of Ecclesiastical History*, and it may be said annihilated by the two Memoirs of M. Varin on the *Causes of the Dissension between the British and the Roman Church*, published by the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, 1858. A digest of the conclusions of these two Memoirs will be found in Appendix II.

[2] See *ante*, vol. ii. book vii.

the Pascal solemnities for the Sunday after the full moon of the vernal equinox, and that date, sanctioned by the Roman Church, had been received along with the Christian faith by all the Churches of Britain, and had been carried by St Patrick to Ireland, and by St Columba to Caledonia. But the Church of Alexandria, having discovered an astronomical error, originating in the employment of the ancient Jewish computation by the Christians, had introduced a more exact calculation, which was adopted by all the Eastern Churches; and the result was, that from the pontificate of St Leo the Great (440-61) a difference of an entire month had arisen between Easter-day at Rome and Easter-day at Alexandria. Towards the middle of the sixth century, the difference ceased to exist; Rome adopted the calculation of Denys le Petit, which demonstrated clearly the error of the day fixed by the Council of Nice, and from this date uniformity was re-established in the Church. But the Saxon invasion had interrupted the ordinary intercourse between Rome and the British Churches; they retained the ancient Roman usage, and it was precisely their attachment to that usage which was their argument against the more exact computation which Augustin and the Italian monks brought with them, but which the British rejected as suspicious novelties, to receive which would be an insult to the traditions of their fathers.[1] It was thus

[1] WALTER, *Alte Wales*, p. 225. DOLLINGER, *op. cit.*, i. 2d part, 216.

from their very fidelity to the early teachings of Rome that they resisted the new Roman missionaries.

This cause of dissension, by far the most important, was of a very recent date, and all the disputes that can be made out on other points (except that regarding the form of the tonsure) were equally new, without being at all more essential. If it had been otherwise—had there been the slightest difference touching doctrine or morals between the British and the Roman Church—Augustin would never have been guilty of the folly of soliciting the aid of the Celtic clergy in the conversion of the heathen Saxons. This would have been but to sow the seeds of confusion and discord in the new Church, which it was his business to organise by means of the energetic co-operation of the native Christians and the envoys of Rome.[1]

There is nothing more painful than to meet in history with endless and passionate contentions upon questions and causes which, after some time has passed, are interesting or even intelligible to no human creature. But it is not Christian antiquity alone that offers us such a spectacle: we find it in all ages. And to those who profess to be scandalised at the overweening importance that the most pious minds of their time have attached to equal trifles, it should be enough to recall the determined obstinacy which prompted great na-

[1] Dollinger, p. 217. Rees, *Welsh Saints*, p. 288.

tions, such as the English and the Russians, to resist the reform of the Gregorian calendar—the one for nearly two centuries, the other amidst the complete uniformity of the entire civilised world.

It is no less true that, by that obstinate fidelity to a venerable, though false, computation, the British set themselves at variance on this question of Easter, not only with Rome and the whole West, but also with the East, which celebrated that festival, like the Jews, on the precise day of the week on which it fell, while the British, in common with the whole Western Church, always held the celebration on Sunday. But this Sunday was, or might be, another day than that kept as Easter-day at Rome.

Who could imagine that this pitiful and absurd difference should have kept the two Churches for two centuries on a footing of direct hostility? Since the British Celts received their ancient custom from Rome itself, why could they not follow Rome in her perfected reckoning as all the rest of the West did? Why should they have positively decided to hold festival while the Romans fasted; and to fast while at Rome they chanted the Hallelujah?

Was there not a more serious, a deeper cause for this dissension, of which the Pascal controversy was but the outward aspect? It is impossible to doubt it; and of all causes it was the most natural and excusable—the instinct of national preservation, exasperated by hatred of the triumphant enemy,

and expressing itself in distrust of the stranger, who seemed to be an accomplice of that enemy.

Augustin knew well that he needed the aid of the Celtic Christians in order to carry on successfully the great work which the Papacy had intrusted to him. Trained in the conciliatory and moderate school of St Gregory the Great, fresh from his recent instructions, he was very far from being exclusive in regard to local personages or customs; and in order to effect the conversion of the Saxons, he claimed in all good faith the co-operation of the numerous and powerful clergy who, for more than a century, had been the very soul of the resistance to the heathen, and who peopled those great cloisters of Wales, into which the sword of the invader had never penetrated.

But the British resisted him with a jealous and obstinate opposition. They would not join him in evangelising their enemies; they had no wish to open to them the gates of heaven.[1]

First conference between Augustin and the British bishops.

Augustin, however, succeeded in obtaining the consent of the principal bishops and doctors of Wales to a conference with him. It was arranged that they should meet on the confines of Wessex, near the banks of the Severn, which separated the Saxons from the Britons. The interview, like that of Augustin with Ethelbert, after his landing in Kent, took place in the open air, and under an oak, which for a long time afterwards was known as

509? 603?

[1] Varin, Memoir cited.

Augustin's oak. He began, not by claiming the personal supremacy which the Pope had conceded to him, but by exhorting his hearers to live in Catholic peace with him, and to unite their efforts to his for the evangelisation of the pagans—that is to say, the Saxons. But neither his entreaties, nor his exhortations, nor his reproaches, nor the eloquence of his attendant monks joined to his own, availed to bend the Britons, who persisted in appealing to their own traditions in opposition to the new rules. After a long and laborious disputation, Augustin at last said, "Let us pray God, who maketh brethren to dwell together in unity, to show us by a sign from heaven what traditions we ought to follow. Let a sick man be brought hither, and he whose prayers shall cure him shall be the one whose faith is to be followed." The British consented reluctantly. An Anglo-Saxon blind man was brought, whom the British bishops could not cure. Then Augustin fell on his knees, and implored God to enlighten the conscience of many of the faithful, by giving sight to this man. Immediately the blind man recovered his vision. The British were touched:[1] they acknowledged that Augustin's course was just and straightforward, but that they could not renounce their old

[1] "Ut pace catholica secum habita, communem evangelizandi gentibus pro domino laborem susciperent. . . . Laboriosi atque longi certaminis finem fecit. . . . Quidam de genere Anglorum, oculorum usu privatus. . . . Confitentur intellexisse se veram esse viam justitiæ quam prædicaret Augustinus."—BEDE, ii. 2.

customs without the consent of their people, and demanded a second assembly, in which their deputies should be more numerous.

The second conference was held soon after. Augustin there found himself in the presence of seven British bishops and of the most learned doctors of the great Monastery of Bangor, which contained more than 3000 monks, and which was, as we have seen, the centre of religious life in Wales. Before this new meeting, the Britons went to consult an anchorite, much famed among them for his wisdom and his sanctity, and asked him if they ought to give heed to Augustin, and abandon their traditions. "Yes," said the hermit, "if he is a man of God." "But how shall we know that?" "If he is meek and lowly of heart, as says the Gospel, it is probable that he carries the yoke of Jesus Christ, and that it is His yoke he offers you; but if he is hard and proud, he comes not from God, and you ought to give no heed to his discourse. In order to prove him, let him arrive the first at the place of council; and if he rises when you approach, you will know that he is a servant of Christ, and you will obey him; but if he rises not to do you honour, then despise him, as he will have despised you."[1]

The instructions of the anchorite were obeyed. Unfortunately, on arriving at the place of council they found Augustin already seated, *more Romano*,

[1] "Sin autem vos spreverit, nec coram vobis adsurgere voluerit, cum sitis plures, et ipse spernatur a vobis."—BEDE, ii. 2.

says an historian, and he did not rise to receive them.[1] This was enough to set them against him. "If this man," said they, "deigns not to rise at our arrival now, how will he slight us when we shall have acknowledged his authority!" From that hour they became intractable, and studied to thwart him at every point. Neither then nor at the first conference did the archbishop make any effort to induce them to acknowledge his personal authority. Let it be added, to the honour of this headstrong race, and rebellious but earnest and generous clergy, that Augustin did not reproach them with any of those infringements of the purity of the priestly life which some authors have imputed to them.[2] With moderation, in scrupulous conformity to the instructions of the Pope, he reduced all his claims to three main points. "You have," said he, "many practices which are contrary to our usage, which is that of the universal Church; we will admit them all without difficulty, if only you will believe me on three points: to celebrate Easter at the right time; to complete the sacrament of baptism[3] according to the usage of the

[1] "Cum ergo convenissent, et Augustinus *Romano more* in sella residens iis non assurrexisset."—HENR. HUNTINGDON, iii. 186, ed. Savile.

[2] "Errorem Bretonum . . . quo alia plura ecclesiasticæ castitati et paci contraria gerunt."—BEDE, v. 18. Compare GILDAS, *De Excidio*, p. 23. Döllinger believes that he refers here to the *subintroductæ*, so often denounced by the councils. He notices elsewhere that the British priests alone have been the object of these accusations, which have never been brought against the other branches of the Celtic Church.

[3] He referred probably to Confirmation.

holy Roman Church; and to preach the word of God along with us to the English nation." To this threefold demand the Celtic bishops and monks offered a threefold refusal, and added that they would never acknowledge him as archbishop.[1] In thus refusing to recognise the personal supremacy of Augustin, they in nowise rejected that of the Holy See. What they dreaded was not a Pope at a distance from them, impartial and universally respected at Rome, but a kind of new pope at Canterbury, within the territory and under the influence of their hereditary foes, the Saxons.[2] And, above all else, they objected to be told of the duty of labouring for the conversion of the odious Saxons, who had slaughtered their forefathers and usurped their lands. "No," said the abbot of Bangor, "we will not preach the faith to this cruel race of stran-

[1] "Quia in multis quidem nostræ consuetudini, immo universalis Ecclesiæ contrariæ geritis; et tamen si in tribus his mihi obtemperare vultis; ut Pascha suo tempore celebretis, ut ministerium baptizandi, quo Deo renascimur, juxta morem sanctæ Romanæ et apostolicæ Ecclesiæ compleatis, ut genti Anglorum una nobiscum verbum Domini prædicetis, cætera quæ agitis, quamvis moribus nostris contraria, æquanimiter cuncta tolerabimus."—BEDE, v. 18.

[2] Hook, the most recent English historian of the archbishops of Canterbury, acknowledges this fact with an impartiality which is not always habitual to him. We shall be excused discussing the pretended anti-papal reply of the orator of Bangor, an English invention, published in the collections of Spelman and Wilkins, and complacently repeated by M. Augustin Thierry. Lingard, Döllinger, *op. cit.*, p. 218, and Professor Walter, have demonstrated its falsity, already exposed by Turberville in his *Manuale Controversiarum;* Rees, Stephenson, Hussey, and all the modern English writers of any weight, have agreed to renounce it. Let us recall here the learned and deeply-to-be-lamented Abbé Gorini's excellent refutation of the inexcusable errors committed by M. Augustin Thierry in his narrative of the mission of St Augustin.

gers who have treacherously driven our ancestors from their country, and robbed their posterity of their heritage."[1]

Threatening prophecy of Augustin against the monks of Bangor.

It is easy to see which of the three conditions Augustin had most at heart by the threatening prediction with which he met the refusal of the British monks. "Since you will not have peace with brethren, you shall have war with enemies: since you will not show to the English the way of life, you shall receive from their hands the punishment of death."

613?

This prophecy was only too cruelly fulfilled some years later. The king of the northern English, Ethelfrid, still a pagan, invaded the district of Wales in which stood the great Monastery of Bangor. At the moment when the battle began between his numerous army and that of the Welsh, he saw at a distance, in an elevated position, a body of men, unarmed and on their knees. "Who are these?" he asked. He was told they were the monks of the great Monastery of Bangor, who, after fasting for three days, had come to pray for their brethren during the battle. "If they pray to their God for my enemies," said the king, "they are fighting against us, unarmed though they be." And he directed the first onslaught to be made against them. The Welsh prince, who should have defended them, fled shamefully, and 1200 monks

[1] Welsh chronicle, entitled *Brut Tysilio*, and GALFRID. MONMOUTHO, xi. 2, ap. WALTER, *op. cit.*, pp. 225, 227.

were massacred on the field of battle, martyrs of Christian faith and of Celtic patriotism.[1] Thus ended, say the annals of Ireland, the day of the slaughter of the saints.[2]

An old calumny, revived in our day, makes Augustin answerable for this invasion, and accuses him of having pointed out the Monastery of Bangor to the Northumbrian heathens.[3] But the Venerable Bede expressly states that he had been for a long time a saint in heaven when this invasion took place. It is enough that Bede himself, much more Saxon than Christian whenever he treats of the British, applauds this massacre more than a century afterwards, and sees in it Heaven's just vengeance on what he calls the infamous army of the disloyal Welsh—that is to say, on the heroic Christians who, in defence of their hearths and

[1] "Cum videret sacerdotes . . . seorsum in loco tutiore consistere, sciscitabatur quid essent hi, quidve acturi illo convenissent. . . . Ergo si adversum nos at Deum suum clamant, profecto et ipsi quamvis arma non ferant contra nos pugnant. Itaque in hos primum arma verti jubet, et sic cæteras nefandæ militiæ copias . . . delevit . . . ut etiam temporalis interitus ultione sentirent perfidi, quod oblata sibi perpetuæ salutis consilia spreverant."—BEDE, v. 18.

[2] *Annales Tighernach*, ad ann. 606.

[3] This false imputation can be traced back to Geoffroy of Monmouth, bishop of St Asaph in the twelfth century, and mouthpiece of the national rancours of Wales. Certain obscure writers, unworthy descendants of the Anglo-Saxons, such as Goodwin and Hammond, have adopted it out of hatred of the Romish Church, and, not knowing how to reconcile it with Bede's positive assertion of the prior death of Augustin, have pretended that this passage of the Venerable historian had been interpolated. But all the modern editors of Bede have been obliged to acknowledge that the contested passage existed in all the MSS. of that author *without exception*. Compare LINGARD, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 74; VARIN, *Premier Mémoire*, p. 25-29; GORINI, *op. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 77.

altars, fell beneath the sword of the pagan Anglo-Saxons, under the orders of a chief who, according to the testimony of Bede himself, slew more of the native population than any of his predecessors.[1]

After such an explosion of his own national antipathies, he seems to be singularly little entitled to reproach the Celts of Wales with the steadfastness of their resentment, as he does in stating that even in his time they made no account of the religion of the Anglo-Saxons, and would hold no more communion with them than with pagans.[2]

It is possible, as an ingenious critic has said, that Augustin and his companions did not treat with sufficient tact the national and insular pride of the British, heightened by a long warlike resistance, by the traditions of the monks, and the patriotic songs of the bards.[3] But nothing, I repeat, indicates the slightest departure on his part from the counsel and example of the glorious pontiff whose disciple and emulator he was. Condemned by the obstinacy of the British to deprive himself of their assistance, he none the less continued his "hunt of men," as his biographer calls it, by evangelising the Saxons, who at least did not wear him out, like the Welsh, with their wordiness and their endless discussions.[4]

[1] BEDE, i. 34.

[2] BEDE, ii. 20. See the text already cited, p. 75.

[3] OZANAM, p. 153.

[4] "Vix crediderim Augustinum a quoquam paganorum majori fatigatum verborum ambage. . . . In occidentalem ab Aquiloni plagam divertit, non tam viatoris quam venatoris aut aucupis morem gerens."—GOTSELINUS, *Hist. Maior*, c. 32, 41.

And yet, even among the former he sometimes encountered an opposition which expressed itself in insult and derision, especially when he passed beyond the bounds of Ethelbert's kingdom. On one occasion, while traversing that region of the country of the West Saxons which is now called Dorsetshire, he and his companions found themselves in the midst of a seafaring population, who heaped on them affronts and outrages. These heathen savages not only refused to hear them, but even drove them away with acts of violence, and in hunting them from their territory, with a rude derision truly Teutonic, fastened to the black robes of the poor Italian monks, as a mark of contempt, the tails of the fish which formed their livelihood.[1] Augustin was not a man to be discouraged by such trifles. Besides, he found in other places crowds more attentive and more impressible. And thus he persevered for seven entire years, until his death, in his apostolic journeys—travelling after, as well as before, his archiepiscopal consecration, like a true missionary, always on foot, without carriage or baggage, and adding to his unwearied preaching good works and miracles—here making unknown springs gush from the ground, there healing by his touch the sick believed to be incurable or dying.[2]

[1] "Plebs impia . . . tota ludibriorum et opprobriorum in sanctos debachata . . . nec manu pepercisse creditur. . . . Fama est illos effulminandos provenientes marinorum piscium caudas sanctis appendisse."—GOTSELINUS, c. 41.

[2] "Tam post præsulatum quam ante, semper pede, absque vehiculo,

Foundations of Ethelbert. Bishoprics of London and Rochester.

Meanwhile Ethelbert did not fail in solicitude for and generosity to the Church of which he had become the ardent disciple. Not content with the gifts which he had bestowed on the two great monasteries of Canterbury—on that which surrounded the metropolitan church, and on the Abbey of St Peter and St Paul without the walls—he seconded with all his might the introduction of Christianity into a kingdom adjacent to his own and placed under his suzerainty—that of the Saxons of the East, or of Essex, the king of which was the son of his sister, and which was only separated from Kent by the Thames. Augustin having sent thither as bishop the monk Mellitus, one of the new missionaries sent to him by Gregory, Ethelbert built at London, the chief city of the West Saxons, a church, dedicated to St Paul, intended for a cathedral, which it still is. In his own kingdom of Kent he authorised the erection of a second bishopric, situated at Rochester, a Roman city, twenty miles west of Canterbury; Augustin placed there as bishop another of the new missionaries, Justus by name; and the king caused a cathedral to be

patiens ambulando, liber et expeditus prædicationi evangelicæ."—ELMHAM, *Hist. Monaster. S. Augustini*, p. 106. Compare GOTSELINUS, c. 44 and 49. This historian reproduces the story of an old man whose grandfather had, while still young, been a scoffer at the wonderful stranger whom the crowd followed and surrounded as though he were an angel from heaven, because he went about healing all their infirmities. "Cum vero audissem illum omnium debilium ac moribundorum curare corpora, ampliori incredulus cachinnabam vesania." He ended, nevertheless, in being baptised by the hand of Augustin himself.

built there, which he named after St Andrew, in memory of the Roman monastery whence Pope Gregory had drawn all the apostles of the Anglo-Saxon race.[1]

All these foundations, destined to last to our own times in spite of so many strange and unhappy changes, invest him with an imperishable claim on the gratitude of Christian posterity; and long afterwards, when the Norman nobility had in their turn seized upon the supreme power and changed the aspect of the Church of England, King Ethelbert became apparent to her as the first who had provided with seignorial strongholds, in the shape of bishops' seats and monasteries, the kingdom which he desired to hold in fee for the Lord God.[2]

Laws of Ethelbert guaranteeing the possessions and peace of the Church.

He did yet more for the Church of his country by securing for her property and her liberties what we may call, in modern rather than just terms, a legal and parliamentary sanction. In one of those periodical assemblies of the sages and chief men of the Saxon people, which bore the name of *Witenagemot*, and which were the origin of the modern Parliament, he caused certain laws—the text of which is still preserved—to be committed to writing and published in the Anglo-Saxon tongue. They confirmed at once the old rights of the people, and the new rights conceded to the new Church.

[1] Bede, ii. 3.

[2] "Tum episcopia et monasteria tanquam dominica castella, quibus Dominicum regnum teneatur, liberaliter ac regaliter passim machinatur." —Gotselinus, *Hist. Maior*, c. 23.

The first of the ninety articles of that legislative act enacts that those who should rob the goods of the Church, of the bishops, or other orders of the clergy, shall make restitution eleven or twelve times beyond the value of the robbery.[1] The same article sanctioned implicitly what the English have since named the *right of sanctuary*—that is, the right of asylum and protection recognised as belonging to the precincts of churches and monasteries—by visiting the violation of that peace of the Church with a penalty the double of that incurred by violation of the public peace. The whole nation thus sanctioned and ratified the work of its king by placing under the safeguard of penal laws the property and safety of the ministers of the religion which it had adopted.[2]

These laws, long known by the name of *Dooms* or *Judgments of Ethelbert*, are the first written laws known to us, not only of the English, but perhaps of any of the Germanic races. The best informed critics attribute to the influence of the Roman monks on the Anglo-Saxon king, this commence-

[1] "Ut ecclesiæ peculium duodecies, episcopi undecies emendaretur."—According to the instructions given by Gregory to Augustin, this surplus value of the restitution did not profit the Church, which was bound to be content with the simple restoration of what had been taken.

[2] "Inter cætera bona quæ genti suæ conferendo conferebat, etiam decreta illi judiciorum juxta exempla Romanorum, cum concilio sapientium constituit. . . . Volens scilicet tuitionem eis quos et quorum doctrinam susceperat, præstare."—BEDE, ii. 5. Compare KEMBLE, *Saxons in England*, ii. 205; HOOK, *op. cit.*, p. 59; WILKINS, *Concilia*, p. 25; THORPE, *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, 1840, c. 1. This last publication, executed by order of the English Government, gives the Saxon text of the laws of Ethelbert, with a very intelligent commentary.

ment of the national, or rather penal code.[1] For its enactments were chiefly penal, and we cannot but admire the wisdom of those missionaries who, trained in the traditions of Roman jurisprudence, nevertheless established and sanctioned the principle of pecuniary compensation universally adopted by the Germanic races. In these laws of Ethelbert a classification of social position is clearly apparent from the minutely exact enumeration of crimes committed against the life or safety of men, the honour of women, religion, and public peace. Every trespass is punished by a penalty proportionate—first, to the gravity of the offence, and next, to the rank of the victim. In case of murder, the compensation is due not only to the family of the deceased, but also to the community of which he was a member, and to the king who was his sovereign. This system, applied for the first time to the defence of the Christian Church by the Saxons of Kent, and for the first time reduced to a written form under the guidance of the Roman monks, will be found in all the subsequent legislation of the Saxon kingdoms, which the bishops and monks, successors of Augustin, continued to guide with a strong yet gentle hand into the ways of Christian civilisation.

Great men, commissioned by God to begin works which are to be truly great and enduring, seldom

[1] Lappenberg, vol. i. p. 142; Lingard, *Hist. of England*, c. 11; Lord Campbell, *Lives of the Chancellors*, art. Angemundus; especially Phillips, *Geschichte des Angelsachsischen Rechts*, p. 61.

live to old age; and when one of them disappears, it often happens that he carries with him on his way to a better world those who have been on earth his companions, servants, and friends. St Gregory the Great, whose pontificate has left an ineffaceable impression upon the memory of Christendom, and a peerless example in the annals of the Church, reigned only fifteen years. He died in the early months of the year 605, and two months after Augustin followed his father and friend to the tomb.[1] The Roman missionary was interred, after the Roman custom, by the side of the public way, the great Roman road which led from Canterbury to the sea, and in the unfinished church of the famous monastery which was about to assume and to preserve his name.

Death of Gregory and of Augustin.

605.

12th March

12th May.

The name of Gregory will remain always identified with that conversion of England which was the labour of love of his whole life, and the greatest glory of his pontificate. His large and tender heart had been the first to conceive the thought of that conquest. His patient and conciliating genius, at once ardent and gentle, prudent and resolute, revealed to him the conditions of success. It is to him that the English race—at this day the most numerous and powerful of all Christian races—owes the revelation of the light of the Gospel.

[1] There has been much dispute about the date of the death of Augustin, which Mabillon had fixed in 607. But the majority of English historians are now agreed upon the date 605. Wharton would even place it as early as 604.—*Anglia Sacra*, vol. i. p. 91.

He was the true apostle, the conqueror of England for God, and, through England, of immense countries which she has subjected to her laws, to her language, and to her religion. It is, then, with good reason that the first English historian claims for him this title. "Called," says Bede, "to a supreme pontificate over all the nations already converted to the faith, to our nation which was in bondage to idols, and out of which he has formed a Christian Church, he has been something more. We may well say of Gregory what Paul said of himself to the Corinthians—that if he has not been the apostle of others, he has been *our* apostle. Yes, we are the seal of his apostleship in the Lord—we, the people whom he rescued from the fangs of the old enemy, to make us partakers of the eternal freedom."[1]

The nature of the means that Gregory employed to accomplish his work, and the moral perfection of the arrangements which he brought to bear on it, are even more to be admired than the work itself;—zeal, devotion, wisdom, moderation, love of souls, and respect for their freedom, pity, generosity, vigilance, indomitable perseverance, divine gentleness, intelligent patience—nothing was awanting in him. We leave the history of his pontificate, and especially of his intercourse with England, with no other regret

[1] "Quia etsi aliis non est apostolus, sed tamen nobis est; nam signaculum apostolatus ejus nos sumus in Domino. . . . Quod nostram gentem per prædicatores quos huc direxit, de dentibus antiqui hostis eripiens, æternæ libertatis fecit esse participem."—Bede, ii. 1.

than that inseparable from witnessing the end of so noble a life; and in losing sight of him, are left uncertain which should be the most admired—his good sense or his good heart, his genius or his virtue.

The figure of St Augustin of Canterbury naturally pales beside that of St Gregory the Great; his renown is, as it were, absorbed into the brilliant centre of the Pontiff's glory. And recent English and German historians[1] have taken delight in bringing out the inferiority of the man whom Gregory chose for his vicegerent and his friend. They have vied with each other in decrying his character and services—accusing him by turns of hauteur and of feebleness, of irresolution and of obstinacy, of softness and of vanity,—trying, especially, to heighten and magnify the indications of hesitation and of self-seeking which they discover in his life. Let it be permitted to these strange precisians to reproach him with having stopped short of the ideal of which they pretend to dream, and which no hero of theirs has ever approached. To our judgment, the few shadows which fall on the noble career of this great saint are left there to touch the hearts and console the spirits of those who are, like him, infirm, and charged sometimes with a mission which, like him, they judge to be beyond their strength.

Among the workers of great works who have changed the history of the world and decided the

[1] Stanley, Hook, Lappenberg.

fate of nations, one loves to meet with those infirmities, which give encouragement to the common average of men.

Let us, then, preserve intact our admiration and our gratitude for the first missionary—the first bishop and abbot of the English people. Let us give our meed of applause to that council which, a century and a half after his death, decreed that his name should be always invoked in the Litanies after that of Gregory, "because it is he who, sent by our father Gregory, first carried to the English nation the sacrament of baptism and the knowledge of the heavenly country." [1]

[1] "Qui genti Anglorum a præfato Papa et patre nostro missus . . . scientiam fidei, baptismi sacramentum et cœlestis patriæ notitiam primus attulit."—*Concilium Cloveshoviense*, anno 747.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST SUCCESSORS OF ST AUGUSTIN—PAGAN REACTION.

Special characteristics of the conversion of England.—All the details of it are known: it has had neither martyrs nor persecutions; it has been the exclusive work of Benedictine or Celtic monks.—All the Roman missionaries were monks; their monasteries served for cathedrals and parish churches.—Laurence, first successor of Augustin.—Mellitus at the council of Rome in 610; Pope's letter to Ethelbert; monks of Saxon origin.—Efforts of Laurence to reconcile the British; his letter to the Irish bishops.—Conversion of the kings of East Anglia and Essex.—Foundation of Westminster; legend of the fisher; King Sebert the first to be buried there; monastic burials; Nelson and Wellington.—Canterbury and Westminster, the metropolis and national necropolis of the English, due to the monks.—Death of Bertha and of Ethelbert; the abbot Peter drowned.—Eadbald, the new king of Kent, remains a pagan; his subjects, as also the Saxons of the East, return to paganism.—Flight of the bishops of London and Rochester; Archbishop Laurence held back by St Peter.—Conversion of Eadbald.—Apostasy of the king of East Anglia; he admits Christ among the Scandinavian gods.—Mellitus and Justus, the second and third successors of Augustin.

Special characteristics of the conversion of England.

THE preaching of the Gospel in England is marked by several characteristics altogether peculiar to itself, and distinguishing it from those revolutions which introduced Christianity into the western nations previously converted to the faith.

In Italy, Gaul, and Spain, the propagation of the

Gospel and the extinction of paganism are surrounded with such obscurity that it is impossible to be sure of the date at which the first evangelists of most of the dioceses lived. In England, on the other hand, nothing is vague or uncertain. Year by year, and day by day, we witness the various phases of the grand event. We take part, as it were, in the very work—the conversion of a great country—which it is so rarely possible to study in detail. We can follow it in all its changes of fortune with the same certainty and precision as if it were an incident in our contemporary missions.

Its details known.

Moreover, in the great lands and illustrious churches which have just been named, the baptism of blood everywhere accompanied or preceded the conversion of the people. Like the apostles at Rome and in the East, the missionaries of the Gospel in the West had, for the most part, to water with their blood the first furrows that they were honoured to draw in the field of the divine Husbandman. Even after the great imperial persecutions had come to an end, martyrdom often crowned the apostolate of the first bishops or their auxiliaries.

Neither martyrs nor persecutors.

In England there was nothing at all like this: from the first day of St Augustin's preaching, and during the whole existence of the Anglo-Saxon Church, there was neither martyr nor persecutor there. When brought within the circle of the pure and radiant light of Christianity, and even before they acknowledged and worshipped it, these fierce

Saxons, pitiless as they were to their enemies, showed themselves very much more humanely disposed and accessible to the truth than the enlightened and civilised citizens of Imperial Rome. Not one drop of blood was shed for the sake of religion, or under any religious pretext; and this wonder occurred at a time when blood flowed in torrents for the most frivolous motives, and in that island where afterwards so many piles were to be lighted, and so many scaffolds raised, to immolate the English who should remain true to the faith of Gregory and Augustin.

The conversion the exclusive work of the monks.

A third distinctive feature of the conversion of England is that it was exclusively the work of monks; first, of Benedictine monks sent from Rome —and afterwards, as we shall see, of Celtic monks, who seemed for a moment about to eclipse or supplant the Italian monks, but who soon suffered themselves to be absorbed by the influence of the Benedictines, and whose spiritual posterity is inseparably connected with that of the Roman missionaries in the common observance of the rule of the great legislator of the monks of the West.

The monastic profession of these first missionaries has been the subject of frequent and long dispute. While it has been admitted that many were of the order to which he himself belonged, it has been denied that all the monks sent by St Gregory the Great were Benedictines. But the unerring and unrivalled learning of Mabillon has settled the

question by irrefutable arguments.[1] It is possible that some clerks or secular priests were to be found among the assistants of the first Archbishop of Canterbury: but it is distinctly proved, by the authority of Bede and of all the earliest records, that Augustin himself and his successors, as well as all the religious of his metropolitan church and the great abbey which bore his name, followed the rule of St Benedict, like the great Pope whose mission they carried out. Gregory, as has been seen,

[1] In the preface of the first century of the *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis S. Benedicti*, paragraph 8, Mabillon has completely proved against Baronius and Marsham, one of the editors of the *Monasticon Anglicanum*, that Gregory, Augustin, and their disciples belonged to the order of St Benedict. The brethren of Saint-Maur, in the life of Gregory placed at the beginning of their edition of his works, have completed the proof (book iii. c. 5, 6, 7). These brief but weighty pages say more on the subject than the folio entitled *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia, sive Disceptatio Historica de Antiquitate Ordinis Congregationisque Monachorum Nigrorum in Regno Angliæ*, opera R. P. Clementis Reyneri, Duaci, 1626. This ill-arranged and tedious compilation is nevertheless important for the later history of England, on account of the numerous and curious articles which it contains. One of the most curious is the note asked and obtained by the author from the four most celebrated and learned English Protestants of his time, Cotton, Spelman, Camden, and Selden, who unanimously declare that all their researches have led them to the conclusion that St Augustin, his companions, and his successors, were Benedictines. The English text of this is to be found in Stevens, *Continuation of Dugdale*, vol. i. p. 171. A modern Anglican, Soames, has recently asserted that the Benedictines did not arrive till the tenth century with St Dunstan; but he has been refuted by the two most distinguished of modern English archæologists, the Protestant Kemble and the Catholic Lingard. The latter, however, is in error in supposing (*History and Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. p. 152) that Augustin placed in the Cathedral of Canterbury clerks and not monks. He has mistaken the early synonymy of the words *clerici* and *monachi*, in modern times used to express two entirely distinct ideas, but which were employed indifferently from the days of Gregory of Tours to those of the Venerable Bede, and even later.

was desirous of taking advantage of the new ecclesiastical organisation of England to introduce there that close alliance of the monastic and ecclesiastical life which, to his mind, realised the ideal of the apostolic church. For more than a century that alliance was universal and absolute. Wherever the pagan temples were transformed into churches—wherever the old churches of the time of the Romans and Britons rose from their ruins—there monastic life prevailed among the missionaries who served the cures. The converted country was thus, little by little, overspread by monasteries; the small ones for a long time held the place of rural parish churches; the large served for cathedrals, chapter-houses, and residences for the bishops, who were all produced by the monastic orders.

Laurence, first successor of Augustin. 605-619.

The first thirty-eight archbishops of Canterbury were all monks; and the first four successors of St Augustin were taken from among the monks of the Monastery of St Andrew at Rome, whom Pope Gregory had appointed to be his fellow-workmen. During his life, Augustin had chosen as his successor in the primacy his companion Laurence, and had procured his consecration beforehand, thus meaning, with fatherly anxiety, to make the best provision for the frail fortunes of the new-born Church of the English.[1] The new archbishop did

[1] "Ne se defuncto adhuc status ecclesiæ tam rudis, vel ad horam pastore destitutus, vacillare inciperet."—Bede, ii. 4. The last historian of the archbishops of Canterbury, Dr Hook, maintains that Laurence was not a monk, taking as his ground the passage in which Bede describes

honour to the choice which had honoured him. He devoted himself nobly to the consolidation of the Church which he had seen founded; he conciliated all hearts, and increased the number of the faithful by the unwearied activity of his preaching no less than by the saintly example of his life.

Laurence lived for ten years in an intimate union with the good king Ethelbert, and acted as the medium of communication between that prince and the Holy See. The third successor of Gregory, Boniface IV.—he who consecrated the Roman Pantheon to Christian worship in memory of all the martyrs—exhibited towards the king and the missionary monks of the kingdom of Kent a goodwill and confidence worthy of his illustrious predecessor. Mellitus, the new bishop of the East Saxons, was sent by Laurence to Rome to consult the Pope upon different matters affecting the interests of the Church of England. He was one of the members of the Council of Rome, in which were promulgated the canons which confirmed the rule of St Benedict, and accorded to the monks the right of administering the sacraments and of being admitted to all the grades of the priesthood.[1] Mel- 606-616. 27th Feb. 610.

him as priest to distinguish him from his companion Peter the monk: "Misit continuo Romam Laurentium presbyterum et Petrum monachum."—i. 27. He forgets that this same Peter is himself described as priest some pages farther on: "Primus ejusdem monasterii abbas Petrus presbyter fuit."—i. 33. The title of priest was not at all incompatible with the monastic profession. That point was settled at the Council of Rome in 610—only then, as now, all monks were not in priest's orders.

[1] "Cum idem Papa cogeret synodum episcoporum Italiæ, de vita monachorum et quiete ordinaturus."—Bede, *loc. cit.*

litus brought back to England the decrees of this council, which he had himself signed along with the other bishops; he brought likewise very gracious letters from the Pope to the archbishop and to the king. "Glorious king," Boniface wrote to Ethelbert, "we accord to you with right good will that which you have demanded of the Apostolic See through our co-bishop Mellitus: to wit, that in the monastery which your holy teacher Augustin, the disciple of Gregory, of blessed memory, consecrated under the name of the Holy Saviour, in your city of Canterbury, and over which our very dear brother Laurence now presides, you should establish a dwelling for monks, living together in complete regularity; and we decree, by our apostolic authority, that the monks who have preached the faith to you may take this new monastic community into association with themselves, and teach its members to live a holy life."[1]

Through the obscurity of this language it seems natural to conclude that the introduction of new monks, probably of Saxon origin, into the Italian community founded by Augustin, is here indicated.

[1] "Fili gloriose, quod ab Apostolica sede per coepiscopum nostrum Mellitum postulatis, libenti animo concedimus; id est, ut vestra benignitas in monasterio in Dorobernensi civitate constituto, quod sanctus doctor vester Augustinus, beatæ memoriæ Gregorii discipulus, sancti Salvatoris nomini consecravit, cui ad præsens præesse dignoscitur dilectissimus frater noster Laurentius, licenter per omnia monachorum regulariter viventium habitationem statuat, apostolica auctoritate decernentes ut ipsi vestri prædicatores monachi monachorum gregem sibi associent et eorum vitam sanctitatum (*sic*) moribus exornent."—Guillelmus Malmesbur., *De Gestis Pontificum Anglorum*, lib. i. p. 118, ed. Savile.

A century passed, however, ere an abbot born in England could be chosen to preside over it.

Efforts of Laurence to bring about the conversion of the Britons.

Like Augustin, Archbishop Laurence was not content to labour for the salvation of the Saxons with his monkish brethren only: his pastoral anxiety urged him to search for the means of bringing the Christians of the ancient British race into unity with Rome, so that he and they might work together for the conversion of the pagans. His experience of the conditions under which the Christian religion might be successfully extended made him bitterly deplore the hostile attitude of the Celtic monks, and the polemical rancour which broke out in them whenever they sought or consented to discuss the matters in dispute. It was at the same moment that the illustrious Columbanus impaired the effect of the admirable example which he set to France, Burgundy, and Switzerland, by his extraordinary eccentricities. The rumour of them had reached even Laurence, who could not forbear referring to it in an epistle which he addressed to the bishops and abbots of all Scotia—that is to say, of Ireland—the chief centre of the Celtic Church. Having failed, like Augustin, in a direct advance which, with his two suffragans, he had made to the clergy of the Welsh Britons, he sought to ascend to the source of the evil by writing to their brethren in the neighbouring island to expostulate with them on their universal intolerance. His letter begins thus:—

"To our very dear brethren, the lords, bishops, and abbots of Ireland,—we, Laurence, Mellitus, and Justus, servants of the servants of God, greeting. The Holy See having directed us, as is its wont, to these western regions, there to preach the faith to the heathen, we have entered this island of Britain, not knowing what we did. Believing that they all followed the rules of the universal Church, we held in great veneration the piety of the Britons and the Scots. When we came to know the Britons, we thought the Scots were better than they. But now, when the bishop Dagan has come to us from Ireland, and when the abbot Columbanus has betaken himself to Gaul, we know that the Scots differ in nothing from the Britons; for the bishop Dagan has not only refused to partake of our hospitality—he has not even deigned to eat in the place which serves as our dwelling."[1] Dagan was a monk of the great Irish Monastery of Bangor: he had come to confer with the mission at Canterbury, and he had undoubtedly been offended by the firm determination of the Roman prelates to maintain the conditions of liturgical unity. No trace has survived of any overtures towards reconciliation on his part, or on that of any other representative of the Celtic Churches.

Conversion of the kings of East Anglia and of Essex.

The Roman monks were for some time more successful among the Saxon settlements—neighbours or vassals of the monarchy of Ethelbert. The

[1] BEDE, *loc. cit.*

most eastern district of the island—that which, lying between the Thames and the sandy outlets of the Ouse, forms a sort of circular projection looking towards Scandinavia—was occupied, towards the north, by the tribe of East Angles, or English of the East. Their king, Redwald, who had paid a visit to the king of Kent, received baptism like him; and his conversion awakened hopes of the conversion of his people—a population much more numerous than that of the country already won for Christ, occupying as it did the large modern counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, with a part of the shires of Cambridge, Huntingdon, Bedford, and Hertford. Between East Anglia and Kent lay the kingdom of Essex, or of the Saxons of the East, already converted during Augustin's life, thanks to its king Sebert, the nephew of the Bretwalda Ethelbert. This kingdom was particularly important on account of its capital, the ancient Roman colony of LONDON, where Mellitus had been appointed bishop by Augustin.

Foundation of Westminster. 610.

He had founded there, as we have seen, on the ruins of an ancient temple of Diana, a monastic cathedral dedicated to St Paul. Soon after, to the west of the episcopal city, and on the site of a temple of Apollo, which had supplanted, after the Diocletian persecution, a church occupied by the first British Christians,[1] the new bishop of London built, with the concurrence of Sebert the king, an-

[1] DUGDALE, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. i. p. 55.

other church and a monastery dedicated to St Peter. Thus on the banks of the Thames, as on those of the Tiber, and in expressive and touching remembrance of Rome, the two princes of the apostles found in these two sanctuaries, separate yet near, a new consecration of their glorious brotherhood in the apostolate and martyrdom.

This modest monastic colony established itself on a frightful and almost inaccessible site,[1] in the middle of a deep marsh, on an islet formed by an arm of the Thames, and so covered with briars and thorns that it was called Thorney Island. From its position to the west of London it took a new name, destined to rank among the most famous in the world—that of WESTMINSTER, or Monastery of the West.

As far as our history can extend, it will always find the national sanctuary of England encircled with growing splendour and celebrity. But at present our business is only to record the legend which brightens its humble cradle—a legend which we have already met with among the British at Glastonbury, and which we shall find among other nations at the beginning of other great monastic foundations—in France at that of St Denis, in Switzerland at Einsiedlen—and which has exercised on the imagination of the English people an influence more durable and powerful than is gener-

[1] "In loco terribili."—Charter quoted by RIDGWAY, *The Gem of Thorney Island*, p. 4.

ally produced by the best authenticated facts. Up to the sixteenth century it was still told from generation to generation that in the night preceding the day fixed for the consecration of the new church, and while Bishop Mellitus, within his tent, was preparing for the ceremony of the morrow, St Peter, the great fisher of men, appeared under the form of an unknown traveller to a poor fisherman whose boat was moored on the bank of the Thames opposite the Isle of Thorns. The water was rough, and the river in flood. The stranger persuaded the fisherman to row him across to the opposite bank, and when he landed he made his way towards the new church. As he crossed its threshold, the fisherman with amazement saw the interior of the edifice lighted up. From floor to roof, within and without, a chorus of angelic voices filled the air with a music such as he had never heard, and with the sweetest odours. After a long interval the music ceased, and all disappeared except the stranger, who, returning, charged the fisherman to go and tell the bishop what he had seen, and how he, whom the Christians called St Peter, had himself come to the consecration of the church which his friend King Sebert had raised to him.[1]

[1] "Ecce subito lux cœlestis emicuit. . . . Affuit cum apostolo multitudo civium supernorum . . . aures angelicæ voces mulcebat sonoritas, nares indicibilis odoris fragantia perfundebat. . . . Nova Dei nupta, consecrante eo qui cœlum claudit et aperit, cœlestibus resplendet luminaribus. . . . Fixis tentoriis a dimidio milliario. . . . Rediit ad piscatorem piscium egregius piscator hominum. . . . Ego sum quem Christiani sanctum Petrum apostolum vocant, qui hanc ecclesiam meam hac nocte

This King Sebert and his wife were buried at Westminster; and subsequently, through many vicissitudes, the great abbey, becoming more and more dear to the Church, to the princes, nobles, and people, was the chosen burial-place of the kings and the royal family. It is still, in our time, as every one knows, the Pantheon of England, who has found no nobler consecration for the memory of her heroes, orators, and poets, her most glorious children, than to give them their last resting-place under the vaults of the old monastic sanctuary.[1] Near that sanctuary the royalty of England long sojourned; in one of its dependent buildings the House of Commons held its first meeting;[2] under its shadow the English Parliament, the most ancient, powerful, and glorious assembly in the world, has

Deo dedicavi . . . quam mihi ille meus amicus Sebertus fabricavit."—Ric. Cirencester., *Speculum Hist. de Gestis Reg. Angl.*, ii. 27. Dugdale quotes no less than four original versions of this miracle, extracted from ancient English chronicles. Compare Baronius, *Annal.*, an. 610, c. 10, and *Acta SS. Bolland.*, January, i. p. 246. Hook gives a plausible enough explanation of the tradition.

[1] Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, Grattan, Canning, Peel – all the great modern orators and statesmen, the poets, the admirals, the generals slain on the battle-field—there repose by the side of Edward the Confessor, and the kings and heroes of the middle ages. The words of Nelson at the moment of beginning the battle of Aboukir, "Now for a peerage or Westminster Abbey!" will be remembered by our readers. In our day the custom has been introduced of burying the great military chiefs at St Paul's. Nelson and Wellington both rest in the vaults of the church which bears the name and occupies the site of the first foundation of Augustin's companion.

[2] It was in the fine chapter-house of Westminster Abbey that the Commons sat. Although their violent debates were lamented as disturbing the monastic worship, they remained there till the Reformation; when St Stephen's Chapel, on the site of which the present House of Commons is placed, was allotted to them.

always flourished, and still remains. Never has a monument been more identified with the history of a people. Each of its stones represents a page of the country's annals!

Canterbury embodies the religious life of England, Westminster has been the centre of her political life and her real capital; and England owes Canterbury, as she owes Westminster, to the sons of St Benedict.

Meanwhile a shadow was about to fall on the dawn of the faith in England. The noble granddaughter of Clotilda, the gentle and pious Queen Bertha, was dead. She preceded her husband in her death, as in her faith, and was buried beside the great Roman missionary who had given her the joy of seeing her husband's kingdom, and her husband himself, converted to Christianity. Death of Queen Bertha.

When the first successor of Augustin celebrated the solemn consecration of the great monastic church which was to be the burying-place, or, as they said then, the bed of rest (*thalamus*) for Christian kings and primates, the remains of the queen, and of the first archbishop of Canterbury, were transferred thither; those of the queen were laid in front of the altar sacred to St Martin, the great wonder-worker of Gaul, and those of the primate before the altar of his father and friend, St Gregory.[1] Three years later, Ethelbert, who had 613.

[1] Guillelm Thorne, *Chron. S. August.*, p. 1765; Thomas de Elmham, *Hist. Monast. S. August.*, p. 432, ed. Hardivicke; Stanley, *Memorials of Canterbury*, p. 26.

And of King Ethelbert. 24th Feb. 616.

married again, also died, and was buried by Bertha's side in the church of St Augustin. He reigned fifty-six years, twenty of which he had been a Christian. "He was," says Bede, "the first English king who ascended to heaven, and the Church numbered him among her saints."[1]

Laurence thus remained the sole survivor of all who had taken part, twenty years before, in the famous conference in the Isle of Thanet, at which the Saxon king and Frankish queen met the Roman missionaries. His companion, Peter, the first abbot of the monastery of St Augustin, was drowned on the French coast, some time before, while fulfilling a mission on which King Ethelbert had sent him. Laurence had thus to encounter all alone the storm which burst forth immediately after the death of Ethelbert. The conversion of that monarch had not insured that of all his people; and

His successor Eadbald, remaining a pagan, instigates the apostasy of his subjects.

Eadbald, his son who succeeded to the throne, had not embraced Christianity along with his father. The looseness of his morals had helped to keep him in idolatry. When he became king he wished to marry his father's widow, the second wife whom Ethelbert had married after the death of Bertha. This kind of incest, with which St Paul reproached the first Christians of Corinth,[2] was only too consonant with the usages of several of the Teutonic races;[3] but such a case had been anticipated, and

[1] *Act. SS. Bolland*, vol. iii. February, p. 470.

[2] 1 Corinth. v. 1.

[3] KEMBLE, *Saxons in England*, ii. 407.

formally forbidden in Gregory's reply to Augustin, when consulted as to the matrimonial relations of the Saxons. This was not Eadbald's only crime. He gave himself up to such transports of fury that he was commonly regarded as beside himself, and possessed with a demon. But his example sufficed to draw into apostasy those who had embraced Christian faith and chastity only from motives of fear, or from a desire to stand well with King Ethelbert.

The tempest which threatened to engulf the recent Christianity of England, became more and more formidable when the death of Sebert, nephew of Ethelbert, and founder of Westminster, raised to the sovereignty of the kingdom of Essex his three sons, who, like the son of the king of Kent, had remained pagans. They immediately resumed the public practice of the idolatry which they had but for a short time foregone during the life of their father, and gave full liberty to all their subjects to worship idols. At the same time they still went occasionally to witness the ceremonies of the Christian worship; and one day, when the bishop Mellitus was administering, in their presence, the communion to the faithful, they said to him, with the freedom of their barbarian pride, "Why do you not offer us that white bread which you gave to our father, and which you continue to give to the people in your church?" "If you will be washed," answered the bishop, "in the fountain of salvation, as your father

Reaction to heathenism among the East Saxons.

Expulsion of the Bishop of London.

was, you may, like him, have your share of the holy bread; otherwise, it is impossible."

"We have no desire," replied the princes, "to enter your fountain—we have no need of it; but we want to refresh ourselves with that bread:" and as they insisted on it, the bishop repeated again that it was needful that they should be cleansed from all sin before being admitted to the communion. Then they flew into a rage, and ordered him to quit their kingdom with all that belonged to him: "Since you will not gratify us in a matter so simple, you shall stay no longer in our country."[1]

The Bishop of London thus driven away, crossed the Thames, and came into the kingdom of Kent, in order to confer with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Rochester as to the course he should pursue. These were the only three bishops of the Christian Church in England, and all three lost courage in presence of the new peril which threatened them. They decided that it was better that they should all return to their own country, there to serve God in freedom, than that they should remain uselessly among barbarians who had revolted from the faith. The two bishops were the first to fly, and crossed over to France. Laurence prepared to follow them, but in the night

Archbishop Laurence wishes to leave England.

[1] "Auxit procellam hujus perturbationis mors Sabercti. . . . Barbari inflati stultitia dicebant: Quare non et nobis panem nitidum porrigis. . . Si vultis ablui fonte illo salutari. . . . Nolumus fontem illum intrare . . . si non vis adsentire nobis in tam facili causa quam petimus, non poteris jam in nostra provincia demorari."—Bede, ii. 5.

before his intended departure, wishing to pray and to weep without restraint over that English Church which he had helped to found a quarter of a century before, and which he was now obliged to abandon, he had his bed placed in the church of the monastery where reposed Augustin, Ethelbert, and Bertha. Scarcely had he fallen asleep when St Peter appeared to him, as Jesus Christ had erewhile appeared to St Peter himself when the prince of the apostles, flying from Nero's persecution, met on the Appian Way his divine Master coming towards Rome, there to be, in his default, a second time crucified.[1] The prince of the apostles overwhelmed with reproaches, and even scourged till the blood came, the bishop who was ready to abandon Christ's flock to the wolves, instead of braving martyrdom to save it.

On the morrow Laurence showed his bruised and bleeding sides to the king, who, at the sight, asked who had dared thus to maltreat such a man as he. "It was St Peter," said the bishop, "who inflicted on me all these blows and sufferings for your salvation."[2] Eadbald, moved and terrified, renounced

[1] Every one has seen at Rome, on the Appian Way, the church called *Domine quo vadis*, built on the spot where, according to tradition, St Peter put that question to the Lord, who answered him, *Vado Romam iterum crucifigi.*—S. Amer., *Contra Auxentium.*

[2] "Flagellis arctioribus afficiens. . . . An mei, inquit, oblitus es exempli qui pro parvulis Christi . . . vincula, verbera, carceres, afflictiones, ipsam postremo mortem, mortem autem crucis, ab infidelibus et inimicis Christi ipse cum Christo coronandus pertuli. . . . Retecto vestimento . . . quantis esset verberibus laceratus ostendit. Qui . . . inquirens quis tanto viro ausus esset plagas infligere."—Bede, ii. 6.

After the vision of St Peter, he is retained by King Eadbald, who is converted.

idolatry, gave up his incestuous marriage, and promised to do his best for the protection of the Church. He called the two bishops, Mellitus and Justus, back from France, and sent them back to their dioceses to re-establish the faith in all freedom. After his conversion he continued to serve God with his people; he even built a new church dedicated to the Holy Virgin, in the monastery founded by St Augustin, where he reckoned upon being buried beside his father and mother.

But he had not the same authority over the other Saxon realms with which Ethelbert had been invested in his capacity of Bretwalda, or military chief of the Saxon federation. He could not succeed in restoring Mellitus to his diocese. The princes of Essex who had expelled him had all perished in a war with the Saxons of the West; but their subjects persevered in idolatry, and the people of London offered the most determined resistance to the re-establishment of the Roman bishop, declaring that they greatly preferred their idolatrous priests.[1]

Defection of East Anglia.

The kingdom of Essex seemed thus altogether lost to the faith; and as to East Anglia, the conversion of its king, Redwald, had not been serious and permanent. No sooner had he returned from the visit to Ethelbert, during which he received baptism,

[1] "Nec, licet auctoribus perditis, excitatum ad scelera vulgus potuit recorrigi. . . . Londonienses episcopum recipere noluerunt, idololatris magis pontificibus servire gaudentes. Non enim tanta erat ei, quanta patri ipsius regni potestas, ut etiam nolentibus ac contradicentibus paganis antistitem suæ posset ecclesiæ reddere."—Bede, ii. 6, 7.

than he allowed himself to be brought back to the worship of his fathers by the influence of his wife and his principal councillors: but he made the same concession to the new religion which had been already accorded to it by a Roman emperor—a concession much more worthy of a Cæsar of the Roman decadence than of the impetuous instincts of a barbarian king. He vouchsafed to assign to the Son of the only true God a place by the side of his Scandinavian deities, and established two altars in the same temple—the one for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the other for the victims offered to the idols.[1]

Of all the conquests made by the envoys of Gregory, there remained now only a portion of the country and of the people of Kent surrounding the two great monastic sanctuaries of Canterbury, —the metropolitan church dedicated to Christ, and the abbey of St Augustin, then bearing the names of St Peter and St Paul. Roman missionaries, one after another, succeeded to the government of these two monasteries, which were now the only centres in which the fire of Christian life still burned in England. During more than a century all the abbots of St Augustin's monastery were chosen from among the Roman monks, and probably

[1] "Rediens domum, ab uxore et quibusdam perversis doctoribus seductus, in eodem fano et altare haberet ad sacrificium Christi et arulam ad victimas demoniorum."—BEDE, iii. 15. Bede adds that in his lifetime there was a king of East Anglia who in his childhood had seen that temple still standing.

from those who came from Mount Cœlius to follow or join him.[1]

2d Feb. 619. In the archiepiscopal see, Laurence, who died three years after his reconciliation to the new king,

624. was succeeded by Mellitus, who thus finally renounced all idea of again settling among the Saxons of the east. After Mellitus, who, though tortured by the gout, showed an indefatigable devotion to his apostolic duties, Justus, the bishop of Rochester, became archbishop. Like Augustin, he received the *pallium*, along with the privilege of ordaining bishops at his pleasure, a privilege conferred upon him by the Pope Boniface V., careful, as his predecessor Boniface IV. had been, to maintain the mission which Gregory had bequeathed to the special charge of the Pontiff. The Pope had received letters from King Eadbald which filled him with comfort and hope; and in placing under the jurisdiction of Archbishop Justus the English not only of Kent but of all the neighbouring kingdoms, he exhorted him to persevere with commendable patience in the work of the redemption of the English people.[2]

Mellitus, Justus, and Honorius companions and successors of Augustin at Canterbury.

[1] The succession of these abbots, as given by Thomas Elmham in his chronicle of the Abbey of St Augustin, is as follows: John, † 618; Rufinianus, † 626; Gratiosus, † 638; this last, *Romanus natione*, as well as his successor Petronius, † 654; Nathaniel, "quondam cum Mellito a Justo a Roma ad Angliam destinatus," † 667; after him the celebrated Adrian, the African, whose successor Albin, elected in 708, was the first *de gente nostra*, says the historian, and was, moreover, the disciple of Adrian, a great Latinist, Hellenist, and *collaborateur* of Bede.

[2] "Hoc illa repensatione vobis collatum est, qua injuncto ministerio jugiter persistentes, laudabili patientia redemptionem gentis illius expectastis."—Bede, ii. 8.

Justus occupied the archbishop's throne for three years only, and was succeeded by Honorius, also a disciple of St Gregory and St Augustin, and the last of the companions of the great missionary who was to fill his place in the primacy of the new Christian kingdom. 624–627.

The Northumbrian Saxons.

In the midst of these mistakes, perils, and difficulties, and while the third successor of Augustin maintained, as best he could, the remains of the Roman mission in the still modest and often menaced metropolis of Canterbury, the horizon suddenly brightened toward the north of England. An event occurred there which seemed to realise the first designs of St Gregory, and to open new and vast fields for the propagation of the gospel. It is in this northern region that the principal interest of the great drama which gave England to the Church is henceforth to be concentrated.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST MISSION IN NORTHUMBRIA — ITS SUCCESSES AND ITS DISASTER — BISHOP PAULINUS AND KING EDWIN.

Extent and origin of the Anglo-Saxon settlements in Northumbria; thanks to their compatriot Bede, their history is better known than that of the others.—Ida and Ella, founders of the two kingdoms of Deïra and Bernicia; Bamborough and the Fair Traitress.—War of the Northumbrians and Britons: Ethelfrid the Ravager, conqueror of the Welsh and of the Scots under Aïdan, the friend of St Columba.—Edwin, representing the rival dynasty, a refugee in East Anglia; on the point of being delivered over to his enemies, he is saved by the queen; vision and promise.—He becomes king of Northumbria and Bretwalda; list of Bretwaldas.—He marries the Christian Ethelburga, daughter of the king of Kent.—Mission of Bishop Paulinus, who accompanies the princess to York.—Influence of women in the conversion of the Saxons.—Fruitless preaching of Paulinus; letters of Boniface V. to the king and queen.—Edwin saved from the poignard of an assassin; birth of his daughter; war against the West Saxons.—Hesitation of Edwin; last effort of Paulinus.—Edwin promises to accept the faith after consulting his parliament.—Speeches of the high priest and of the chief captain.—Baptism of Edwin and of his nobility.—Bishopric and monastic cathedral of York.—The king and the bishop labour for the conversion of the Northumbrians.—General baptism by immersion.—Paulinus to the south of the Humber.—Foundations of Southwell and Lincoln.—Consecration of Honorius, fourth successor of Augustin at Canterbury.—Letter of Pope Honorius to the two metropolitans and to King Edwin.—Prosperous reign of Edwin.—Conversion of East Anglia; foundation of Edinburgh; conquest of Anglesea; public security; the woman and the foster-child; the copper cups; the *tufa* of the Bretwalda.—League of the Saxons and Britons of Mer-

cia against the Saxons of Northumbria : Cadwallon and Penda.—Edwin is killed.—Flight of Paulinus and Ethelburga.—Overthrow of Christianity in Northumbria and East Anglia.—Check of the Roman missionaries ; their virtues and their faults.—There remain to them only the metropolis and the abbey of St Augustin at Canterbury, which continue to be the two citadels of Roman influence.

Origin and extent of the kingdom of Northumbria.

Of all the settlements made by the Teutonic conquerors of Britain, that of the Angles to the north of the river Humber, which seems to divide into two parts the island of Great Britain, and from which is derived the name of Northumbria, was, beyond comparison, the most important. This kingdom occupied the whole eastern coast from the mouth of the Humber to the Firth of Forth, including the existing counties of York, Durham, and Northumberland, with all the south-eastern portion of modern Scotland. To the west it extended to the borders of the British territories of Cambria and Strathclyde, and even approached, on the frontiers of Caledonia, that new kingdom of the Scots of Ireland which the great missionary Columba had just inaugurated.

Its history the best known through the Northumbrian Bede.

Northumbria was not merely the largest kingdom of the Saxon Heptarchy—it is also that whose history is the most animated, dramatic, and varied —the richest in interesting and original characters. It is that, in short, where the incidents of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon conquerors, and of the propagation of monastic institutions, appear to us in fullest light. This is naturally explained by the fact that it is the birthplace of the Venerable

Bede. This great and honest historian—the English Gregory of Tours, and the father of British history—was born and always lived in Northumberland. Hence in his interesting narratives a natural prominence is given to the men and the affairs of his native region, along with an exact and detailed reproduction of the local traditions and personal recollections which he treasured up and repeated with such scrupulous care.

547. Bede informs us that about a century after the first landing of the Saxons, under Hengist, in the country of Kent, their neighbours, the Angles, crossing the North Sea, founded on the opposite coast of Britain two colonies, long distinct, sometimes united, but finally combined together under the name of Northumbria.[1] The wall anciently raised by the Emperor Severus from the mouth of the Solway to that of the Tyne to check the Caledonian incursions, was their boundary. The oldest of the two kingdoms was that of the Bernicians to the north. Their chief, Ida—who, like Hengist, claimed to be a descendant of Odin—established his residence in a fortress which he called Bamborough, after his wife Bebba, with that conjugal reverence so often illustrated even among the most savage Germans. The British bards, in return, have named this queen the Fair Traitress, because she was of British origin, and fought in the foremost ranks on

Ida, founder of the kingdom of Bernicia.

[1] United from 588 to 633; separated at the death of Edwin in 634; and reunited anew under Oswald and Oswy.

the field of battle against her countrymen.[1] The imposing remains of this fortress, situated on a detached rock on the coast, still surprise and arrest the traveller. From this point the invasion of the Angles spread over the fertile valleys of the Tweed and Tyne.

The second colony, that of the Deïrians, to the south, was concentrated principally in the valley of the Tees and in the extensive region which is now known as Yorkshire. The first chief of the Deïrians of whom anything is known, was that Alla or Ella, whose name—pronounced by the young slaves exposed for sale in the Forum—suggested to St Gregory the hope of soon hearing the Hallelujah echo through his kingdom.[1] This region, to the north of the Humber, was precisely that which had suffered most from the Caledonian incursions; and, according to some authors, the Saxons of Hengist, called in the character of allies by the Britons to their aid, were already established before the arrival of the Deïrian colony. But Ida and his Angles would not in any character hold tenure under their Germanic compatriots from the south of the island, and instead of fighting against the Picts or the Scots they leagued themselves with them to crush the ill-starred Britons.

Ella, founder of the kingdom of Deïra. 559-588.

Ida, who had twelve sons, and who reigned 547-559.

[1] A. DE LA BORDERIE, *Luttes des Bretons Insulaires contre les Anglo-Saxons*, p. 155.

[2] See *ante*, p. 330.

twelve years, used fire and sword against the natives with such animosity that the British bards surnamed him the *Man of Fire*, or the *Great Burner*. They withstood him to the last extremity, and he fell in battle against them. But his
588. grandson, Ethelfrid, took a terrible revenge. He was Ella's son-in-law; and at the death of the latter, and to the prejudice of the rights of the chief's son, Ethelfrid reunited the two kingdoms of Deïra and Bernicia, and mustering to his own standard all the Anglo-Saxons of Northumbria, he subdued or massacred a greater multitude of the Britons than any other of the invading chiefs.[1] He was, says Bede, the ravaging wolf of Holy Writ: in the morning he devoured his prey, and in the evening he divided his spoil. The vanquished, who had called his grandfather the Burner, had only too good cause to call Ethelfrid the Ravager.

Ethelfrid the Ravager,

Conqueror of the Scots and Britons. The greatness of Northumbria due to him. 588–616.

He had not, however, like his predecessors, the Caledonians for auxiliaries. They had become Christians, thanks to the apostolic zeal of Columba and his Irish missionaries; and far from seconding the pagan invaders, the Dalriadian Scots, recently established in Great Britain,[1] came to the succour of the Britons, who were their fellow-Christians. Their king, Aïdan—the same who had been

[1] "Nemo in tribunis, nemo in regibus plures eorum terras, exterminatis vel subjugatis indigenis, aut tributarias genti Anglorum, aut habitabiles fecit."—Bede, i. 34.

[2] "Rex Scotorum qui Britanniam inhabitant."—*Ibid.* See *ante*, p. 163.

consecrated by Columba, the monastic apostle of Caledonia—marched against Ethelfrid at the head of a numerous army. But his friend, the holy monk of Iona, was no longer there, as of old,[1] to protect him with his prayers, and aid him with his ardent sympathies. The Scots and the Saxons met 603.
at Degstane, near the existing frontier of England and Scotland. After a desperate struggle the Scots army was cut to pieces; and this defeat put an end for ever to any desire on the part of the northern Celts to undertake the defence of their brethren of the south against the Teutonic conquerors.

Having conquered the Scots, the formidable hea- 607 or 613.
then threw himself on the Britons of Wales; and it was then that he fulfilled the prophecy of Augustin by exterminating the twelve hundred monks of Bangor. After this he completed the conquest of Northumbria, and fell, ten years later, in an encounter with his countrymen, the East Angles, under the command of that King Redwald whom we have seen professing Christianity for a time to please King Ethelbert.[2]

East Anglia, as the name itself indicates, was occupied by a colony of the same race as the Angles of Northumbria. On the death of the first Chris- 616.
tian king of Kent, Redwald inherited the title of Bretwalda, which gave him a certain military supremacy over the whole Anglo-Saxon federation. He had given shelter to the son of Ella, who, while

[1] See *ante*, p. 183. [2] See *ante*, p. 409.

Edwin, brother-in-law of Ethelfrid, but representing the rival dynasty, takes refuge with the East Angles.

still a child, had been dethroned by his brother-in-law, the terrible Ethelfrid. This young prince, named Edwin, grew up at Redwald's court, and had even been married to the daughter of his protector. Ethelfrid, seeing in him a rival and a successor, employed by turns threats and bribes to induce Redwald to surrender the royal exile. The East Anglian prince was on the point of yielding, when one of the friends of Edwin came by night to apprise him of his danger, and offered to conduct him to a place of refuge, where neither Redwald nor Ethelfrid should be able to discover him. "No," replied the young and generous exile, "I thank you for your goodwill, but I shall do nothing. Why should I begin again to wander a vagabond through every part of the island, as I have too much done? If I must die, let it be rather by the hand of this great king than by that of a meaner man." Notwithstanding, moved and agitated by the news, he went out, and seated himself on a rock before the palace, where he remained for a long time alone and unnoticed, a prey to agonising uncertainty.[1]

Vision and promise of Edwin.

All at once he beheld before him, in the midst of the darkness, a man whose countenance and dress were unknown to him, who asked him what he did there alone in the night, and added, "What wilt

[1] "Si ergo vis, hac ipse hora te educam. . . . Gratias quidem ago benevolentiæ tuæ. . . . Quin potius, si moriturus sum, ille me magis quam ignobilior quisquam morti tradat. . . . Solus ipse mœstus in lapide pervigil . . . cum diu tacitus mentis angoribus et cæco carperetur igni."—Bede, ii. 12.

thou promise to him who shall rid thee of thy grief, by dissuading Redwald from delivering thee up to thy enemies, or doing thee any harm?" "All that may ever be in my power," answered Edwin. "And if," continued the unknown, "he promised to make thee king, and a king more powerful than all your ancestors, and all the other kings in England?" Edwin promised anew that his gratitude would be commensurate with such a service. "Then," said the stranger, "if he who shall have exactly foretold to you such great fortunes, offers you counsels more useful for your welfare and your life than any of your fathers or kinsmen have ever received, do you consent to follow them?" The exile swore that he would implicitly obey him by whom he should be rescued from such great peril and made king.

Thereupon the unknown placed his right hand upon his head, saying, "When a like sign shall be shown thee, then recall this hour—thy words and thy promise." With this he disappeared so suddenly, that Edwin believed he had spoken not with a man but with a spirit.[1] A moment after his friend came running to announce that he had no longer anything to fear, and that King Redwald,

[1] "Quid mercis dare velis ei qui. . . . Quid si etiam regem te futurum . . . ita ut omnes qui ante te reges in gente Anglorum fuerant potestate transcendas. . . . Tum ille tertio: Si autem qui tibi tanta taliaque dona veraciter prædixerit. . . . Cum hoc ergo tibi signum advenerit, memento hujus temporis, ac loquelæ nostræ, et ea quæ nunc promittis adimplere ne differas. His dictis, ut ferunt, repente disparuit."—BEDE.

having confided his project to the queen, had been dissuaded by her from his breach of faith.

This princess, whose name has been unfortunately forgotten, had, like most of the Anglo-Saxon women, an all-powerful influence in the heart of her husband. More happily inspired than when she had induced him to renounce the baptism which he had received when with Ethelbert,[1] she showed him how unworthy it would be to sell for gold his soul, and what is more, his honour, which she esteemed the most precious of all jewels.[2]

Edwin becomes king of the Northumbrians.

Under the generous influence of the queen, Redwald not only refused to give up the exiled prince, but having sent back the ambassadors intrusted with the costly presents of Ethelfrid, he declared war against him. The result was that, Ethelfrid
616. having been defeated and slain, Edwin was established as king in Northumbria by his protector Redwald, who was now the chief of the Anglo-Saxon federation. The sons of Ethelfrid, although, on the mother's side, nephews of the new king, were obliged to fly, like Edwin himself in his youth. They went for refuge to the Dalriadian Scots, whose apostle Columba had been. We shall presently see what resulted from this exile, to Northumbria and the whole of England.

[1] See *ante*, p. 419.

[2] "Postquam cogitationem suam reginæ in secreto revelavit, revocavit eum ille ab intentione . . . ammonens quia nulla ratione conveniat . . . immo fidem suam, quæ omnibus ornamentis pretiosior est amore pecuniæ perdere."—BEDE, *loc. cit.*

Like his brother-in-law Ethelfrid, Edwin reigned over the two united kingdoms of Deïra and Bernicia; and, like him, he waged a vigorous war against the Britons of Wales. Having thus become 624.
the dreaded chief of the Angles of the North, he found himself esteemed and sought after by the East Angles, who on the death of their king, Redwald, offered him the sovereignty. But Edwin preferred to repay the protection which he had received from Redwald and his wife by leaving the kingdom of East Anglia to their son. He reserved, however, the military supremacy which Redwald had exercised, as well as the title of Bretwalda, which had passed from the king of Kent to the king of East Anglia, but which, after being held by Edwin, was to remain always attached to the Northumbrian monarchy. Edwin becomes Bretwalda.

We have no precise information regarding the origin or the nature of the authority with which the Bretwalda was invested. It is apparent only that this authority, at first of a temporary and exclusively military character, extended, after the conversion of the different kingdoms of the Heptarchy, to ecclesiastical affairs. It is evident also that it added to the royal dignity the prestige of a real supremacy, all the more sought after that it was probably conferred, not only by the vote of the other kings, but of all the chiefs of the Saxon nobility.[1]

Thus then was accomplished the mysterious pre-

[1] The *ealdormen*—those whom Bede calls *primates tribuni*. Bede gives

diction of Edwin's nocturnal visitor; he was now a king, and more powerful than any of the English kings before him. For the supremacy of the Bretwalda, added to the vast extent of country occupied by the Angles of the North and East, secured to the king of Northumbria a preponderance altogether different from that of the petty kings of the South who had borne the title before him. Having reached this unhoped-for elevation, and having lost his first wife, a daughter of the king of East Anglia, he sought a second bride, and asked in marriage the sister of the king of Kent, the daughter of Ethelbert and Bertha, a descendant of Hengist and Odin through her father, and of St Clotilda through her mother. She was called Ethelburga — that is, noble protectress; for this word *Ethel*, which appears so often in Anglo-Saxon names, is simply, as has been already remarked, the German *edel*, noble. Her brother Eadbald,

He marries the daughter of the first Christian king of Kent.

the following as the succession of chiefs of the Anglo-Saxon federation, up to the time when the title of Bretwalda became extinct :—

About 560, Ella, king of Sussex.
,, 577, Ceawlin, king of Wessex.
,, 596, Ethelbert, king of Kent.
,, 616, Redwald, king of East Anglia.
,, 624, Edwin, } kings of Northumbria.
,, 635, Oswald, }
,, 645, Oswy, }

Lappenberg believes, with every appearance of reason, that after the death of Oswy, in 670, the authority of the Bretwalda passed to Wulfhere, king of Mercia, whose supremacy over the king of Essex is proved by Bede himself, iii. 30. Mackintosh interprets the term *Bret-walda* by that of *dompteur* or arbiter (*wielder*) of the Britons; but he gives no satisfactory reason for that etymology.

brought back by Archbishop Laurence to the Christian faith, at first refused the demand of the king of Northumbria. He answered that it was impossible for him to betroth a Christian virgin to a pagan, lest the faith and the sacraments of the true God should be profaned by making her live with a king who was a stranger to His worship. Far from being offended at this refusal, Edwin promised that, if the princess was granted to him, he would do nothing against the faith that she professed; but, on the contrary, she might freely observe all the rites of her religion, along with all who might accompany her to his kingdom—men or women, priests or laymen. He added that he would not himself refuse to embrace his wife's religion, if after having had it examined by the sages of his council he found it to be more holy and more worthy of God than his own.[1]

It was on these conditions that her mother Bertha had left her country and her Merovingian family to cross the sea and wed the king of Kent. The conversion of that kingdom had been the reward of her sacrifice. Ethelburga, destined, like her mother, and still more than she, to be the means of introducing a whole people to the knowledge of Christianity, followed the maternal example. She furnishes us with a new proof of the

1 "Nec abnegavit se etiam eamdem subiturum esse religionem si tamen examinata a prudentibus sanctior et Deo dignior posset inveniri."—BEDE, ii. 9.

lofty part assigned to women in the history of the Germanic races, and of the noble and touching influence attributed to them. In England as in France, and everywhere, it is ever through the fervour and devotion of Christian women that the victories of the Church are attempted or achieved.

But the royal virgin was intrusted to the Northumbrians, only under the guardianship of a bishop charged to preserve her from all pagan pollution, by his exhortations, and also by the daily celebration of the heavenly mysteries. The king, according to Bede, had thus to espouse the bishop at the same time as the princess.[1]

Bishop Paulinus.

This bishop, by name Paulinus, was one of those still surviving Roman monks who had been sent by St Gregory to the aid of Augustin. He had been twenty-five years a missionary in the south of Great Britain, before he was consecrated bishop of Northumbria by the third successor of Augustin at Canterbury. Having arrived with Ethelburga in Edwin's kingdom, and having married them, he longed to see the whole of the unknown nation amongst whom he had come to pitch his tent, espoused to Christ. Unlike Augustin, after his landing on the shores of Kent, it is expressly stated that Paulinus was disposed to act upon the Northumbrian people before attempting the conversion

21st July 625.

[1] "Ordinatus episcopus . . . sic cum præfata virgine ad regem quasi comes copulæ carnalis advenit."—Bede, ii. 9.

of the king.[1] He laboured with all his might to add some Northumbrian converts to the small company of the faithful that had accompanied the queen. But his efforts were for a long time fruitless; he was permitted to preach, but no one was converted.

In the mean time the successors of St Gregory watched over his work with that wonderful and unwearying perseverance which is characteristic of the Holy See. Boniface V., at the suggestion, no doubt, of Paulinus, addressed two letters to the king and queen of Northumbria, which recall those of Gregory to the king and queen of Kent. He exhorted the glorious king of the English, as he calls him, to follow the example of so many other emperors and kings, and especially of his brother-in-law Eadbald, in submitting himself to the true God, and not to let himself be separated, in the future, from that dear half of himself, who had already received in baptism the pledge of eternal bliss.[2] He conjured the queen to neglect no effort to soften and inflame the hard and cold heart of her husband, to make him understand the beauty of the mysteries in which she believed, and the rich reward which she had found in her own regeneration, to the end that they twain whom

Intervention of Pope Boniface V. with the king of Northumbria.

22d Oct. 625.

[1] "Toto animo intendens ut gentem quam adibat, ad cognitionem veritatis advocans, uni viro sponso virginem castam exhiberet Christo. . . . Laboravit multum ut . . . aliquos, si forte posset, de paganis ad fidei gratiam prædicando converteret."—BEDE, ii. 9.

[2] "Gloriosam conjugem vestram, quæ vestri corporis pars esse dignoscitur, æternitatis præmio per sancti baptismatis regenerationem illuminatam."—*Ibid.*

human love had made one flesh here below, might dwell together in another life, united in an indissoluble union.[1] To his letters he added some modest presents, which testified assuredly either his poverty or the simplicity of the times: for the king, a linen shirt embroidered with gold and a woollen cloak from the east; for the queen, a silver mirror and an ivory comb; for both, the blessing of their protector St Peter.

But neither the letters of the pope, nor the sermons of the bishop, nor the importunities of the queen, prevailed to triumph over the doubts of Edwin. A providential event, however, occurred to shake, without absolutely convincing him. On the Easter-day after his marriage an assassin, sent by the king of the West Saxons, made his way to the king, and, under the pretext of communicating a message from his master, tried to stab him with a double-edged poisoned dagger, which he held hidden under his dress. Prompted by that heroic devotion for their princes, which among all the Germanic barbarians coexisted with continual revolts against them, a lord named Lilla, having no shield at hand, threw himself between his king and the assassin, who struck with such force

Edwin saved from the dagger of an assassin. 20th April 626.

[1] "Insiste ergo, gloriosa filia, et summis conatibus duritiam cordis . . . . insinuatione mollire dematura. . . . In undens sensibus ejus . . . . quantum sit admirabile quod renata præmium consequi meruisti. Frigiditatem cordis . . . succende. . . . Ut quos copulatio carnalis affectus unum quodam modo corpus exhibuisse monstratur, hos quoque unitas fidei etiam post hujus vitæ transitum in perpetua societate conservet."—BEDE, *loc. cit.*

that his weapon reached Edwin even through the body of his faithful friend.[1] The same night, the night of the greatest of Christian festivals, the queen was delivered of a daughter. While Edwin was rendering thanks to his gods for the birth of his first-born, the Bishop Paulinus began, on his part, to thank the Lord Christ, assuring the king that it was He who by His prayers to the true God had obtained that the queen should bear her first child without mishap, and almost without pain. The king, less moved by the mortal danger that he had just escaped, than by the joy of being a father without peril or hurt to his beloved Ethelburga, was charmed by the words of Paulinus, and promised to renounce his idols for the service of Christ, if Christ granted him life and victory in the war which he was about to wage against the king who had tried to procure his assassination. As a pledge of his good faith, he gave the new-born child to the bishop, that he might consecrate her to Christ. This first child of the king, the first native Christian of the Northumbrian nation,[2] was baptised on Whitsunday (Pentecost), along with eleven persons

Birth and baptism of the first-born of Edwin.

[1] "Missus a rege . . . nomine Cuichelmo . . . qui habebat sicam bicipitem toxicatam. . . . Minister regi amicissimus . . . non habens scutum . . . mox interposuit corpus suum ante ictum pungentis, sed tanta vi hostis ferrum infixit, ut per corpus militis occisi etiam regem vulneraret."—BEDE, *loc. cit.*

[2] "Ut regina sospes absque dolore gravi sobolem procrearet. . . . Prima de gente Nordanhymbrorum."—BEDE, *loc. cit.* She married King Oswy, one of her father's successors. We shall see her take a part in the struggle between the monastic and the Celtic influence in Northumbria.

of the royal household. She was named Eanfleda, and was destined, like most of the Anglo-Saxon princesses, to exercise an influence over the destiny of her country.

Edwin came back victorious from his struggle with the guilty king. On his return to Northumbria, though since giving his promise he had ceased to worship idols, he would not at once, and without further reflection, receive the sacraments of the Christian faith. But he made Paulinus give him more fully, what Bede calls, the reasons of his belief. He frequently conferred with the wisest and best instructed of his nobles upon the part which they would counsel him to take. Finally, being by nature a man sagacious and reflective, he passed long hours in solitude—his lips indeed closed, but discussing many things in the depths of his heart, and examining without intermission which religion he ought to prefer.[1]

The history of the Church, if I mistake not, offers no other example of an equally long and conscientious hesitation on the part of a pagan king. They all appear equally prompt alike for persecution or for conversion. Edwin, as the testimony of an incontestable authority reveals him to us, experienced

[1] "Non statim et inconsulte sacramenta fidei percipere voluit. . . . Verum primo diligentius . . . rationem fidei ediscere et cum suis primatibus quos sapientiores noverat, curavit conferre, quod de his agendum arbitrarentur. Sed et ipse cum esset vir natura sagacissimus, sæpe diu solus residens, ore quidem tacito, sed in intimis cordis multa secum colloquens, quod sibi esset faciendum, quæ religio servanda tractabat."—BEDE, *loc. cit.*

all the humble efforts, the delicate scruples, of the modern conscience. A true priest has said with justice: "This intellectual travail of a barbarian moves and touches us. We follow with sympathy the searcher in his hesitations; we suffer in his perplexities; we feel that this soul is a sincere one, and we love it." [1]

Meanwhile Paulinus saw time passing away without the word of God which he preached being listened to, and without Edwin being able to bow the pride of his intelligence before the divine humility of the cross. Being informed of the prophecy and the promise which had put an end to the exile of the king, he believed that the moment for recalling them to him had come.[2] One day when Edwin was seated by himself, meditating in the secret of his own heart upon the religion which he ought to follow, the bishop entered suddenly and placed his right hand upon his head, as the unknown had done in the vision, asking him if he recognised that sign.[3] The king, trembling, would

[1] Gorini, *Défense de l'Eglise*, vol. ii. p. 87. Nothing in this excellent work can surpass the author's refutation, step by step, of M. Augustin Thierry's narrative of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons. Compare Faber, *Life of St Edwin*, 1844, in the series of *Lives of the English Saints*.

[2] According to M. Thierry, "this secret had probably escaped Edwin among the confidences of the nuptial couch." Bede says exactly the contrary, though without affirming anything. "Tandem ut verisimile videtur didicit (Paulinus) *in spiritu*, quod vel quale esset oraculum regi quondam cœlitus ostensum."—Bede, ii. 12.

[3] "Cum videret difficulter posse sublimitatem animi regalis ad humilitatem . . . vivificæ crucis inclinari. . . . Cum horis competentibus solitarius sederet, quid agendum sibi esset, quæ religio sequenda sedulus

Last effort of Paulinus.

have thrown himself at the feet of Paulinus, but he raised him up, and said gently, "You are now delivered by God's goodness from the enemies that you feared. He has given you the kingdom which you desired. Remember to accomplish your third promise, which binds you to receive the faith and to keep its commandments. It is thus only that after being enriched with the divine favour here, you will be able to enter with God into the fellowship of the eternal kingdom."

The king promises conversion after having consulted Parliament.

"Yes," answered Edwin at length, "I feel it; I ought to be, and I will be, a Christian." But, always true to his characteristic moderation, he stipulated only for himself. He said that he would confer with his great nobles, his friends, and his councillors, in order that, if they decided to believe as he did, they should be all together consecrated to Christ in the fountain of life.

Discussion in the assembly.

Paulinus having expressed his approval of this proposal, the Northumbrian parliament, or, as it was then called, the council of sages (*witena-gemot*), was assembled near to a sanctuary of the national worship, already celebrated in the time of the Romans and Britons, at Godmundham, hard by the gates of York. Each member of this great national council was, in his turn, asked his opinion of the new doctrine and worship.[1] The first who answered was

secum ipse scrutari consuesset, ingrediens ad eum quadam die vir Dei."—BEDE, ii. 12.

[1] "Quibus auditis et rex suscipere se fidem et velle et debere respondebat. Verum adhuc cum amicis principibus, et consiliariis suis sese de

the high priest of the idols, by name Coïfi, a singular and somewhat cynical personage. "My opinion," said he, "is most certainly that the religion which we have hitherto followed is worth nothing; and this is my reason. Not one of your subjects has served our gods with more zeal than I have, and notwithstanding, there are many of your people who have received from you far greater gifts and dignities. But if our gods were not good for nothing, they would have done something for me who have served them so well. If then, after ripe examination, you have found this new religion which is preached to us more efficacious, let us hasten to adopt it." [1]

One of the great chiefs held different language, in which are revealed to us that religious elevation and poetic melancholy wherewith the minds of these Germanic heathens were often imbued. "You remember, perhaps," said he to the king, "what sometimes happens in the winter evenings whilst you are at supper with your caldormen and thanes;[2] while the good fire burns within, and it rains and snows, and the wind howls without, a sparrow enters at the one door and flies out quickly at the other.

hoc collaturum esse dicebat. . . . Habito enim cum sapientibus consilio, sciscitabatur singillatim ab omnibus, qualis sibi doctrina eatenus inaudita . . . videretur. . . . His similia et cæteri majores natu ac regis consiliarii prosequebantur."—BEDE, ii. 13.

[1] "Profiteor quia nihil omnino virtutis, nihil utilitatis religio illa quam hucusque tenuimus. . . . Si autem Dii aliquid valerent."—*Ibid.*

[2] "Cum ducibus ac ministris tuis." "*Mit thynem Ealdormannum and Thegnum*," is King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon translation of the words of Bede.

During that rapid passage it is sheltered from the rain and cold; but after that brief and pleasant moment it disappears, and from winter returns to winter again. Such seems to me to be the life of man, and his career but a brief moment between that which goes before and that which follows after, and of which we know nothing. If, then, the new doctrine can teach us something certain, it deserves to be followed." [1]

After much discourse of the same tendency, for the assembly seems to have been unanimous, the high priest Coïfi spoke again with a loftier inspiration than that of his first words. He expressed the desire to hear Paulinus speak of the God whose envoy he professed to be. The bishop, with permission of the king, addressed the assembly. When he had finished, the high priest cried, "For a long time I have understood the nothingness of all that we worshipped, for the more I endeavoured to search for truth in it the less I found it; but now I declare without reserve that in this preaching I see the shining of the truth, which gives life and salvation and eternal blessedness. I vote, then, that we give up at once to fire and to the curse the altars which we have so uselessly consecrated." [2] The king im-

[1] "Alius optimatum regis subdidit: Talis mihi videtur, rex, vita hominum . . . quale cum te residente ad cœnam accenso foco in media et calido effecto cœnaculo . . . adveniens unus passerum domum citissime pervolaverit . . . mox de hieme in hiemem regrediens."—Bede, ii. 13.

[2] "Unde suggero, o rex, ut templa et altaria quæ sine fructu utilitatis sacravimus ocius anathemati et igni contradamus."—Bede, ii. 3.

mediately made a public declaration that he adhered to the gospel preached by Paulinus—that he renounced idolatry and adopted the faith of Christ. "But who," asked the king, "will be the first to overthrow the altars of the ancient gods, and to profane their sacred precincts?" "I," replied the high priest; whereupon he prayed the king to give him arms and a stallion, that he might the more thoroughly violate the rule of his order, which forbade him to carry arms and to mount ought but a mare. Mounted on the king's steed, girt with a sword, and lance in hand, he galloped towards the idols, and in the sight of all the people, who believed him to be beside himself, he dashed his lance into the interior of their temple. The profaning steel buried itself in the wall; to the surprise of the spectators, the gods were silent, and the sacrilege remained unpunished. Then the people, at the command of the high priest, proceeded to overthrow and burn the temple.[1]

Baptism of King Edwin, and of the nobility.

These things occurred in the eleventh year of Edwin's reign. The whole Northumbrian nobility and a large part of the people followed the example of the king, who was baptised with much solemnity on Easter-day (627) by Paulinus at York, in a wooden church, built in haste while the catechumens were prepared for baptism.[2] Immediately

12th April 627.

1 "Ille respondit: Ego. . . . Rogavit sibi regem arma dare et equum emissarium quem ascendens . . . pergebat ad idola."—Bede, ii. 3. Compare the Saxon version quoted by Lingard, i. 30.

2 "Accepit rex cum cunctis gentis suæ nobilibus ac plebe perplurima

afterwards he built around this improvised sanctuary a large church in stone, which he had not time to finish, but which has since become the splendid Minster of York, and the metropolitan church of the north of England. The town of York had been already celebrated in the times of the Romans. The Emperor Severus and the father of Constantine had died there. The Northumbrians had made it their capital, and Edwin there placed the seat of the episcopate filled by his teacher Paulinus. Thus was realised the grand design of Gregory, who, thirty years before, at the commencement of the English mission, had instructed Augustin to send a bishop to York, and to invest him with the jurisdiction of metropolitan over the twelve suffragan bishopries which in imagination he already saw founded in the north of the country conquered by the Anglo-Saxons.[1]

627–633. The king and the bishop laboured together for six years for the conversion of the Northumbrian people, and even of the English population of the neighbouring regions. The chiefs of the nobility and the principal servants of the king were the first to receive baptism, together with the sons of Edwin's first marriage. The example of a king was,

fidem et lavacrum. . . . Ipse doctori et antistiti suo Paulino sedem episcopatus donavit. . . . Baptizatus est ibi sed et alii nobiles et regii viri non pauci."—BEDE, ii. 14.

[1] "Qui tuæ subjaceant ditioni . . . ita duntaxat ut si eadem civitas cum finitimis locis verbum Dei receperit, ipse quoque XII episcopos ordinet, et metropolitani honore perfruatur."—BEDE, i. 29.

however, far from being enough, among the Anglo-Saxons, to determine the conversion of a whole people; and the first Christian king and the first bishop of Northumbria did not, any more than Ethelbert and Augustin, think of employing undue constraint. Doubtless it required more than one effort on their part to overcome the roughness, the ignorance, the indifference of the heathen Saxons. But they had, at the same time, much encouragement, for the fervour of the people and their anxiety for baptism were often wonderful. Paulinus having gone with the king and queen, who several times accompanied him on his missions, to a royal villa far to the north, they remained there, all three, for thirty-six days together, and during the whole of that time the bishop did nothing else from morning till night than catechise the crowds that gathered from all the villages around, and afterwards baptise them in the river which flowed close by. At the opposite extremity of the country, to the south, the name of Jordan is still given to a portion of the course of the river Derwent, near the old Roman ford of Malton, in memory of the numerous subjects of Edwin that were there baptised by the Roman missionary.[1] Everywhere he baptised in the rivers or streams, for there was no time to build churches.[2] However, he built, near Edwin's principal palace, a

The king and bishop labour together for the conversion of the Northumbrians.

Baptism *en masse* by immersion.

1 *The Times* of 17th March 1865.

2 The Glen in Northumberland, the Swale, and especially the Derwent, in Yorkshire, are still mentioned among the rivers in which the bishop baptised thousands of converts by immersion.

stone church, whose calcined ruins were still visible after the Reformation, as well as a large cross, with this inscription: *Paulinus hic prædicavit et celebravit.*[1]

Passing the frontiers of the Northumbrian kingdom, Paulinus continued his evangelistic course among the Angles settled to the south of the Humber, in the maritime province of Lindsay. There also he baptised many people in the Trent; and long afterwards, old men, who had in their childhood received baptism at his hands, recalled with reverent tenderness the venerable and awe-inspiring stranger, whose lofty and stooping form, black hair, aquiline nose, and emaciated but imposing features, impressed themselves on every beholder, and proclaimed his southern origin.[2] The beautiful monastic church of Southwell consecrates the memory of the scene of one of those multitudinous baptisms; and it is to the mission of Bishop Paulinus on this side the Humber that we trace the foundation of that magnificent Cathedral of Lincoln, which rivals our noble Cathedral of Laon in its position, and even surpasses it in grandeur, and perhaps in beauty.[3]

He commences the Cathedral of Lincoln.

[1] At Dewsbury, on the banks of the Calder. ALFORD, *Annales Anglo-Saxoniæ*, ap. BOLLAND., vol. vi. Oct., p. 118.

[2] "Quemdam seniorem . . . baptizatum a Paulino . . . præsente rege Adwino. . . . Quoniam effigiem ejusdem Paulini referre esset solitus. . . . Vir longæ staturæ, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilenta, naso adunco perenni, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu."—BEDE, ii. 16.

[3] All the most beautiful religious edifices of England—York, Lincoln, and Southwell—trace their origin to the episcopate of Paulinus.—FABER, *op. cit.*

It was in the stone church (Bede always notes this detail most carefully) built by Paulinus at Lincoln, after the conversion of the chief Saxon of that town, with all his house, that the metropolitan bishop of York had to proceed to the consecration of the fourth successor of Augustin in the metropolitan see of Canterbury. Honorius was, like Paulinus, a monk of Mount Cœlius at Rome, and one of the first companions of St Augustin in his mission to England. He was a disciple of St Gregory, and had learned from the great pontiff the art of music, and it was he who led the choir of monks on the occasion of the first entrance of the missionaries, thirty years before, at Canterbury.[1] The Pope then reigning was also named Honorius, first of that name. He sent the *pallium* to each of the two metropolitans, and ordained that when God should take to himself one of the two, the other should appoint a successor, in order to avoid the delay of a reference to Rome, so difficult by reason of the great distance to be travelled by sea and land. In the eloquent letter which accompanied the *pallium*, he reminds the new archbishop that the great Pope Gregory had been his master, and should ever be his model, and that the whole work of the archbishops, his predecessors, had been but the fruit of the zeal of that incomparable pontiff.[2]

And there consecrates the fifth Archbishop of Canterbury. 628.

625-640.

[1] Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops*, pp. 53, 111.

[2] "Dilectissimo fratri Honorio Honorius. . . . Exoramus ut vestram dilectionem in prædicatione Evangelii laborantem et fructificantem sec-

The Pope wrote also to King Edwin to congratulate him on his conversion and on the ardour and sincerity of his faith, and to exhort him to read much in the works of St Gregory, whom he calls the Preacher of the English, and whom he recommends the king to take for his perpetual intercessor with God.[1] But when this letter reached England, Edwin was no more.

Prosperity and beneficence of the reign of Edwin.

The six years which passed between his conversion and his death may certainly be reckoned among the most glorious and happy that it was ever given to any Anglo-Saxon prince to know. He speedily raised Northumbria to the head of the Heptarchy. On the south, his ardent zeal for the faith which he had embraced after such ripe reflection extended its influence even to the populations which, without being subjected to his direct authority, yet belonged to the same race as his subjects.

Conversion of the East Angles.

The East Angles, as we have seen, had offered him their crown, and he had refused it. But he used his influence over the young king, who owed to

tantemque magistri et capitis sui sancti Gregorii regulam perpeti stabilitate confirmet (redemptor) . . . ut fide et opere, in timore Dei et caritate, vestra adquisitio decessorumque vestrorum quæ per Domini Gregorii exordia pullulata convalescendo amplius extendatur . . . longa terrarum marisque intervalla, quæ inter nos ac vos obsistunt, ac et nos condescendere coegerunt, ut nulla possit ecclesiarum vestrarum jactura per cujuslibet occasionis obtentum quoque modo provenire: sed potius commissi vobis populi devotionem plenius propagare."—Ap. BEDAM, ii. 18.

[1] "Prædicatores vestri . . . Gregorii frequenter lectione occupati, præ oculis affectum doctrinæ ipsius, quam pro vestris animabus libenter exercuit, habetote: quatenus ejus oratio, et regnum vestrum populumque augeat, et vos omnipotenti Deo irreprehensibiles repræsentet."—*Ibid.*, ii. 17.

him his elevation to the throne, to induce him to embrace the Christian religion, with all his subjects. Eorpwald thus expiated the apostasy of his father; and Edwin thus paid the ransom of the generous pity that the royalty of East Anglia had lavished on his youth and his exile.

On the north he extended and consolidated the Anglo-Saxon dominion as far as the isthmus which separated Caledonia from Britain. And he has left an ineffaceable record of his reign in the name of the fortress built upon the rock which commanded the entrance of the Forth, and which still lifts its sombre and alpine front—true Acropolis of the barbarous north—from the midst of the great and picturesque city of Edinburgh (*Edwin's burgh*).

On the west he continued, with less ferocity than Ethelfrid, but with no less valour and success, the contest with the Britons of Wales. He pursued them even into the islands of the channel which separates Great Britain from Ireland; and took possession of the Isle of Man and another isle which had been the last refuge of the Druids from the Roman dominion, and which, after its conquest by Edwin, took the name of the victorious race, *Angles-ey*.

Within his own kingdom he secured a peace and security so unknown both before and after his reign that it passed into a proverb; it was said that in the time of Edwin a woman with her newborn child might traverse England from the Irish

Channel to the North Sea without meeting any one who would do her the least wrong. It is pleasant to trace his kindly and minute care of the well-being of his subjects in such a particular as that of the copper cups which he had suspended beside the fountains on the highways, that the passers-by might drink at their ease, and which no one attempted to steal, whether from fear or from love of the king. Neither did any one ever reproach him for the unwonted pomp which distinguished his train, not only when he went out to war, but when he rode peacefully through his towns and provinces, on which occasions the lance surmounted with a large tuft of feathers[1]—which the Saxons had borrowed from the Roman legions, and which they had made the sacred standard of the Bretwalda and the ensign of the supreme sovereignty in their confederation—was always carried before him in the midst of his military banners.

But all this grandeur and prosperity were about to be engulfed in a sudden and great calamity.

Alliance of the heathen of Mercia and the British Christians against Edwin.

There were other Angles than those who, in Northumbria and East Anglia, were already subdued and humanised by the influence of Christianity: there remained the Angles of Mercia—the great central region stretching from the Humber to the

[1] "Sicut usque hodie in proverbio dicitur, etiamsi mulier una cum recens nato parvulo vellet totam perambulare insulam a mari ad mare, nullo se lædente valeret. . . . Erectis stipitibus æreos caucos suspendi juberet. . . . Illud genus vexilli quod Romani *Tufam*, Angli vero *Tuuf* appellant."—BEDE, ii. 16.

Thames. The kingdom of Mercia was the last state organised out of the Anglo-Saxon conquest. It had been founded by that portion of the invaders who, finding all the eastern and southern shores of the island already occupied, were compelled to advance into the interior. It became the centre of the pagan resistance to, and occasional assaults upon, the Christian *Propaganda*, which was henceforth to have its headquarters in Northumbria. The pagans of Mercia found a formidable leader in the person of Penda, who was himself of royal extraction, or, as it was then believed, of the blood of Odin, and had reigned for twenty-two years, but who was inflamed by all the passions of a barbarian, and, above all, devoured with jealousy of the fortunes of Edwin and the power of the Northumbrians. Since Edwin's conversion these wild instincts were intensified by fanaticism. Penda and the Mercians remained faithful to the worship of Odin, whose descendants all the Saxon kings believed themselves to be. Edwin and the Northumbrians were, therefore, in their eyes no better than traitors and apostates. But more surprising still, the original inhabitants of the island, the Christian Britons, who were more numerous in Mercia than in any other Anglo-Saxon kingdom, shared and excited the hatred of the pagan Saxons against the converts of the same race. These old Christians, it cannot be too often repeated, always exasperated against the invaders of their island, took no

under Penda, 633–655,

account of the faith of the converted Angles, and would not on any terms hold communion with them.[1] The Welsh Britons, who maintained their independence, but who, for more than a century, had been constantly menaced, defeated, and humiliated by Ida, Ethelfrid, and Edwin, professed and nourished their antipathy with even greater bitterness.[2] Their chief, Ceadwalla or Cadwallon, the last hero of the Celtic race in Britain, at first overcome by Edwin and forced to seek refuge in Ireland and in Armorica,[3] had returned thence with rage redoubled, and with auxiliaries from the other Celtic races, to recommence the struggle against the Northumbrians. He succeeded in forming an alliance with Penda against the common enemy. Under these two chiefs an immense army, in which the British Christians of Wales jostled the pagans of Mercia, invaded Northumbria. Edwin awaited them at Hatfield, on the southern frontier of his kingdom. He was there disastrously defeated, and perished gloriously, sword in hand, scarce forty-eight years of age, dying a death which entitled him to be ranked amongst the martyrs.[4] His eldest son fell with him; the younger, taken prisoner by Penda, who swore to preserve his life, was infamously murdered. Northumbria was ravaged with fire and sword, and its recent Christianity completely

and Cadwallon.

Northumbria is invaded.

Edwin is slain. 11th Oct. 633.

Christianity extinguished in Northumbria.

[1] Bede, ii. 20. See *ante*, p. 75, note.

[2] Lappenberg, vol. i. p. 159. La Borderie, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

[3] See his amusing adventures in Richard of Cirencester, vol. ii. p. 32.

[4] *Act. SS. Bolland.*, die 12 Octobris.

obliterated. The most barbarous of the persecutors was not the idolatrous Penda, but the Christian Cadwallon, who, during a whole year, went up and down all the Northumbrian provinces massacring every man he met, and subjecting even the women and children to atrocious tortures before putting them to death. He was, says Bede, resolved to extirpate from the soil of Britain the English race, whose recent reception of Christianity only inspired this old Christian, intoxicated with blood and with a ferocious patriotism, with scorn and disgust.[1]

It is not known why Northumbria, after the death of Edwin and his son, was not subjugated and shared among the conquerors; but it remained divided, enslaved, and plunged once more into paganism. Deïra fell to Osric, cousin-german of Edwin; Bernicia to Eanfrid, one of the sons of Ethelfrid, who had returned from his exile in Scotland. Both had received baptism: the one with his cousin at York; the other at the hands of the Celtic monks of Iona. But a pagan reaction was the inevitable consequence of the overthrow of the first Christian king of Northumbria. The two

[1] "Maxima est facta strages in Ecclesia vel gente Nordanhymbrorum. . . . Unus ex ducibus paganus, alter . . . pagano sævior. . . . Quamvis nomen et professionem haberet Christiani, adeo animo et moribus barbarus, ut ne sexui muliebri vel innocuæ parvulorum parceret ætati, quum universos atrocitate ferina morti per tormenta contraderet. . . . Totum genus Anglorum Britanniæ finibus erasurum se esse deliberans; sed nec religioni Christianæ quæ apud eos exorta erat, aliquid impendebat honoris."—Bede, ii. 20. Compare iii. 1.

princes yielded to that reaction, and renounced their baptism, but without gaining anything thereby. The king of Deïra was killed in battle with the Britons; and the king of Bernicia was murdered at an interview which he had sought with the savage Cadwallon.

Flight of Paulinus and of Ethelburga.

Bishop Paulinus did not consider himself called upon to remain a witness of such horrors. His one thought was to place in safety the widow of King Edwin—that gentle Ethelburga who had been confided to him by her brother for a different destiny: he brought her back by sea to her brother's kingdom, with the daughter and the two youngest sons whom she had borne to Edwin. Even beside her brother, the king of Kent, she was afraid to keep them in England; and, wishing to devote her own widowhood to God, she intrusted them to the king of the Franks, Dagobert, her cousin,[1] at whose court they died at an early age. As to Paulinus, who had left in charge of his church at York only a

[1] The following is the table of the relationship between the queen of Northumbria and the king of Austrasia:—

CLOTAIRE I.

CARIBERT, king of Paris.	CHILPERIC I.
BERTHA, wife of Ethelbert.	CLOTAIRE II.
ETHELBURGA, wife of Edwin.	DAGOBERT I.

Dagobert mounted the throne of Austrasia in 628, three years after Ethelburga's marriage.

brave Italian deacon, of whom we shall speak hereafter, he found the episcopal see of Rochester vacant in consequence of the death of the Roman monk, who was the titular bishop, and who, sent by the primate to the Pope, had just been drowned in the Mediterranean. Paulinus was invested with this bishopric by the king and by the archbishop Honorius, whom he had himself consecrated at Lincoln; and there he died, far from his native land, after having laboured during forty-three years for the conversion of the English.

Thus appeared to crumble away in one day and for ever, along with the military and political preeminence of Northumbria, the edifice so laboriously raised in the north of England by the noble and true-hearted Edwin, the gentle and devoted Ethelburga, the patient and indefatigable Paulinus, and by so many efforts and sacrifices known to God alone. The last and most precious of Edwin's conquests was not destined to survive him long. His young kinsman, the king of the East Angles, was no sooner converted than he fell beneath the poignard of an assassin; and, like Northumbria, East Anglia relapsed altogether into the night of idolatry.[1]

Repulse of the Romish missionaries everywhere, save in the kingdom of Kent.

After thirty-six years of continual efforts, the monastic missionaries sent by St Gregory the Great had succeeded in establishing nothing, save in the petty kingdom of Kent. Everywhere else they had been

[1] Bede, ii. 15.

baffled. Of the six other kingdoms of the Heptarchy, three—those of the Saxons of the South and of the West, and the Angles of the Centre[1]—remained inaccessible to them. The three last—those of the Saxons of the East, of the Angles of the East and North[2]—had successively escaped from them. And yet, except the supernatural courage which courts or braves martyrdom, no virtue seems to have been awanting to them. No accusation, no suspicion, impugns their all-prevailing charity, the fervent sincerity of their faith, the irreproachable purity of their morals, the unwearying activity, the constant self-denial, and austere piety of their whole life.

How, then, are we to explain their defeat, and the successive failure of their laborious efforts? Perhaps they were wrong in not sufficiently following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles—in not preaching enough to the humble and poor—in not defying with proper boldness the wrath of the great and powerful. Perhaps they were wrong in addressing themselves too exclusively to the kings and warlike chiefs, and in undertaking nothing, risking nothing, without the concurrence, or against the will, of the secular power.[3] Hence, without doubt, these changes of fortune, these reactions, and sudden and complete relapses

[1] Wessex, Sussex, Mercia.

[2] Essex, East Anglia, Northumbria.

[3] LINGARD, *Anglo-Saxon Church*, vol. i. pp. 40, 74.

into idolatry, which followed the death of their first protectors: hence, also, these fits of timidity, of discouragement, and despair, into which we see them falling under the pressure of the sudden changes and mistakes of their career. Perhaps, in short, they had not at first understood the national character of the Anglo-Saxons, and did not know how to gain and to master their minds, by reconciling their own Italian customs and ideas with the roughness, the independence, and the manly energy of the populations of the German race.

At all events, it is evident that new blood was needed to infuse new life into the scattered and imperfect germs of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, and to continue and carry out the work of the missionary monks of Mount Cœlius.

These monks will always have the glory of having first approached, broken, and thrown seed upon this fertile but rebellious soil. Others must water with the sweat of their toil the fields that they have prepared, and gather the harvest they have sown. But the sons of St Gregory will none the less remain before God and man the first labourers in the conversion of the English people. And, at the same time, they did not desert their post. Like mariners intrenched in a fort built in haste on the shore that they would fain have conquered, they concentrated their strength in their first and indestructible foundations at Canterbury,

in the metropolitan monastery of Christ Church and the monastery *extra muros* of St Augustin, and there maintained the storehouse of Roman traditions and of the Benedictine rule, along with that citadel of apostolic authority which was for centuries the heart and head of Catholic England.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX.

I.

IONA.

NOTES OF A VISIT MADE IN AUGUST 1862.

(See pages 142 and 289.)

"To each voyager
Some ragged child holds up for sale a store
Of wave-worn pebbles. . . ,
How sad a welcome!
Where once came monk and nun with gentle stir
Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer. . . .
Think, proud philosopher!
Fallen though she be, this Glory of the West,
Still on her sons the beams of mercy shine;
And hopes, perhaps, more heavenly bright than thine,
A grace by thee unsought, and unpossest,
A faith more fixed, a rapture more divine,
Shall gild their passage to eternal rest."

WORDSWORTH.

THE traveller who visits Iona in the hope of finding imposing ruins or picturesque sites is singularly disappointed in his expectation. Nothing, as has been already stated, can be less attractive than this island, at first sight at least. At view of its flat and naked surface a sense of that painful desolation which is so well expressed by the word *bleak*, untranslatable in French, strikes the traveller, and he involuntarily turns his eyes from that low and sandy shore to the lofty mountains of the neighbouring isles and

coasts. After a time, however, a sweet and salutary impression is evolved from the grave, calm, and lonely aspect of a place so celebrated in spiritual history. The spirit is a little reassured, and the visitor takes his way through the poor hamlet, which is the only inhabited place on the island, towards the ruins, of which so many learned and splendid descriptions have been written. Here again there is a fresh disappointment. These ruins have nothing about them that is imposing—nothing, above all, absolutely nothing, that recalls St Columba, unless it be two or three inscriptions in the Irish tongue (*Eirsch* or *Erse*), which was his language. But they are not the less of great interest to the Catholic archæologist, since they are all connected with the cloistral and ecclesiastical foundations which succeeded to the monastery of Columba. Turning to the north, after passing through the village, you come first to the remains of a convent of canonesses, the last foundation of the twelfth century, but which, for a little, survived the Reformation. Transformed into a stable, then into a quarry, the roofless church still exists; and in it is to be seen the tomb of the last prioress, Anna Macdonald, of the race of the *Lords of the Isles*, who died in 1543. Thence you pass to the famous cemetery, which was for so many centuries the last asylum of kings and princes, nobles and prelates, and of the chiefs of the clans and communities of all the neighbouring districts, and—as a report made in 1594 says—"of the best people of all the isles, and consequently the holiest and most honourable place in Scotland." At that epoch were still to be seen three great mausoleums with the following inscriptions:—

TUMULUS REGUM SCOTIÆ.
TUMULUS REGUM HIBERNIÆ.
TUMULUS REGUM NORWEGIÆ.

There was even the tomb of a king of France, whose name is not given, but who must have abdicated before his death.

Nothing is now shown of these mausoleums except the site. A tradition, more or less authentic, decides that eight Norwegian kings or princes were interred at Iona, four kings of Ireland, and forty-eight Scottish kings. But all historians agree in stating that, from the fabulous times of Fergus until Macbeth, Iona was the ordinary burying-place of the kings and nobles of the Scottish race, and even of some Saxon princes, such as Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, who died in 685.[1] Shakespeare, with his customary fidelity to national tradition, has not failed to send the body of Macbeth's victim to be buried at Iona.[2]

The burial-place of the kings was not transferred to the Abbey of Dunfermline until the time of Malcolm Canmore, the conqueror and successor of Macbeth, and the husband of St Margaret.

At present this cemetery contains eight or nine rows of flat tombs very close to each other. Most of these are of blue stone, and covered with figures sculptured in relief, with inscriptions and coats of arms. On many of them may be distinguished the galley which was the heraldic ensign of the Macdonalds, *Lords of the Isles*—the greatest house of the north of Scotland. Among them is shown the tomb of the contemporary of the great king Robert Bruce and the hero of the poem of Walter Scott, who died in 1387. And there are still to be seen tombs bearing the arms of the Macdougalls, Lords of Lorn, the Macleods, Mackinnons, Macquaries, and especially Macleans—that is to say, of all the chiefs of the clans of

[1] "Ejus corpus in Hii insula Columbæ sepultum."—Simeon Dunelm, ap. Twyden, *Scriptor.*, p. 3.

[2] See the passage quoted, p. 279, note.

the adjacent districts, along with several tombs of bishops, priors, and other ecclesiastics of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In the centre of the burying-ground stands a ruined chapel, called St Oran's, from the name of the first of the Irish monks who died after their landing on the island. It is 30 feet long by 15 broad, with a fine semi-circular western door. It is the most interesting, and perhaps the oldest monument of the island, for it is held to have been built by the sainted Queen Margaret, wife of Malcolm Canmore († 1093), mother of the king St David, one of the most touching figures in the history of Scotland and of Christendom. She was the regeneratrix of faith and piety in Scotland, and was animated by a great devotion to St Columba, by whose intervention she obtained her only son, after having long been without children.[1]

Before reaching the burying-ground, and on leaving it, two large stone crosses are seen, each of a single block, and from 12 to 14 feet high—the one called Maclean's, and the other St Martin's—the only two which remain of 360, which are said to have formerly existed on the island. Both, fixed on a pedestal of red granite, are long and slender in form, covered over with sculptured ornaments, in a style at once graceful and quaint, partially hidden by the moss. One of them, Maclean's cross, is said to be that of which Adamnan speaks in his *Life of Columba*. It is difficult to understand how, with the scanty means at their disposal in an age so remote, it was possible to quarry, sculpture, transport, and erect blocks of granite of such a size.

[1] Fordun, *Scoti-chronicon*, v. 37. Reeves's *Adamnan*, pp. xxx., cdx.

At last we reach the Cathedral, or rather the Abbey Church, a large oblong edifice, in red and grey granite, 166 feet in length, 70 in breadth at the transept, ruined and roofless, like all the others, but still retaining all its walls, and also several large cylindrical columns, rudely sculptured, with the tombs of an abbot of the clan Mackinnon, date 1500, and different chiefs of the Macleans. Over the cross of the transept rises a square tower, which is seen far off at sea, and is lighted by windows pierced in the stone, in unglazed lozenges and circles, such as are still found at Villers, in Brabant, and at St Vincent and Anastasius, near Rome.[1] The end of the choir is square, and cannot be older than the fourteenth century; but other portions of the church are of the twelfth and thirteenth. It has, like the beautiful Abbey Church of Kelso, in the south of Scotland, this peculiarity, that the choir is twice as long as the nave.

The sombre and sad aspect of all these ruins is owing in part to the absence of all verdure, and of that ivy which, especially in the British Isles, adorns elsewhere the ruins of the past.

This church became, in the fourteenth century, the cathedral of the bishopric of the Isles, the titular bishop of which afterwards resided at *Man*, one of the *Sudereys* —that is, the isles lying south of the point of Ardnamurchan, and distinct from the *Norderneys*, to the north of that cape, a division which dates from the times of the Norwegians. Hence the title of *Episcopus Sodorensis*, Bishop of *Sodor and Man*. Iona became the cathedral of

[1] See upon these stone windows the curious works of M. Albert Lenoir, in his *Architecture Monastique*, 1st part, pp. 133, 301, and of M. Ed. Didron, *Annales Archéologiques*, vol. xxiii. pp. 45, 201.

the bishopric of the Scottish Isles after the union of Man to England under Edward I.

After the Reformation, and the suppression of all the bishoprics and monasteries, decreed in 1561 by the Convention of Estates, the Calvinistic Synod of Argyll gave over all the sacred edifices of Iona to a horde of pillagers, who reduced them to the condition in which they are now seen. During the whole of the eighteenth century the ruins and the cemetery lay desert: the cathedral was made into a stable; and thus was accomplished the prophecy in Irish verse ascribed to Columba, according to which a time was to come when the chants of the monks should give place to the lowing of oxen. The 360 crosses which covered the soil of the holy island disappeared during this period, most of them being thrown into the sea. Some were conveyed to Mull and to the adjacent islands, and one is shown at Campbelton—a monolith of blue granite, incrusted with sculptures. In this same island of Mull is to be observed a line of isolated columns leading to the point of embarkation for Iona, and destined, according to local tradition, to guide the pilgrims of old to the sacred isle. (Note of the Rev. T. Maclauchlan, read before the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, February 1863.)

Since 1693 the island has belonged to the Dukes of Argyll, chiefs of the great clan Campbell, who watch over the preservation of the ruins. It brings them an annual revenue of about £300. It contains a population of 350 souls, all Presbyterians. This small population—which lives on the produce of the fisheries and of a few wretched fields manured with seaweed, where potatoes, barley, and rye are grown, but where even oats refuse to thrive—offers, notwithstanding, the curious spectacle which is

found in many of even the pettiest villages in Scotland: it has two churches, and forms two congregations; the one connected with the *official* or *Established* worship, whose ministers are nominated by the lay patrons, and supported by the ancient property of the Church; and the other attached to the "*Free Kirk*"—that is, a body whose ministers are elected by the people and maintained by their voluntary offerings.

The most interesting works to be consulted upon this celebrated island are, first of all, the Report of Archdeacon Munro in 1594; then Johnson's *Journey to the Hebrides;* Pennant's *Tour in the Hebrides;* N. D. Graham's *Antiquities of Iona,* London, 1850, in quarto, with plates; and finally, a good article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for November 1861.

We cannot quit Iona without adding a word on the neighbouring isle of Staffa, which contains the famous grotto of Fingal. It was not really known to the world till the visit of Sir Joseph Banks in August 1772. There is no previous mention of it, not even in the journey of the great Johnson, although it lies within sight of Iona, which closes the horizon on the south, as seen from the cave—a juxtaposition which has inspired Walter Scott with these beautiful lines:—

> "Where, as to shame the temples decked
> By skill of earthly architect,
> Nature herself, it seems, would raise
> A Minster to her Maker's praise. . . .
> Nor doth its entrance front in vain
> To old Iona's holy fane,
> That nature's voice might seem to say,
> 'Well hast thou done, frail child of clay!
> Thy humble powers that stately shrine
> Tasked high and hard—but witness mine!'"

The English, and travellers in general, profess a great enthusiasm for this cave, which, as every one knows, forms an immense vault, into which the sea penetrates, and which rests on rows of polygonal basaltic columns, ranged like the cells of a beehive. Sir Robert Peel, in a speech in 1837, compared the pulsations of the Atlantic which roll into this sanctuary to the majestic tones of the organ; but he adds, "The solemn harmony of the waves chants the praises of the Lord in a note far more sublime than that of any human instrument." This sound is, in fact, the grandest thing about this famous cave. The rest is a wonder of nature far inferior, it seems to us, to the wonders of art, and especially of Christian art. The grotto of Fingal is but 66 feet high by 42 broad, and 227 long. What is that beside our grand cathedrals and monastic churches, such as Cluny or Vezelay?

II.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE TWO PAPERS OF M. VARIN

ON THE CAUSES OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BRITISH CHURCH AND THE CHURCH OF ROME.

(*Recueil des Mémoires présentés par divers Savants à l'Académie des Inscriptions.*—1st series, 1858.)

(See page 379.)

FIRST ARTICLE.

The struggle maintained by the three Celtic nations (Britons, Picts, and Scots) against the Roman apostles of the Saxon colony resulted, according to the opinion of the learned Anglicans of the last three centuries, from the fact that Britain had received the faith from Asia, and would thus have communicated anti-Roman doctrines to the Picts and Scots. The three populations, instructed by Asiatics, would naturally reject the religious yoke which Rome tried to lay on them (under the pretext of evangelising the Anglo-Saxons) no less than the political yoke of the new conquerors. But,

1. There *never* was anything in common in the usages of Asia and those in which the three insular nations differed from the Roman Church.

2. The origin of these secondary differences, in as far as the Picts and Scots are concerned, is found in the subsequent substitution of British usages for those which, in the beginning, these same people received direct from Rome.

3. These usages, even among the Britons, did not extend back to the origin of Christianity in the British Isles. They had their sources in circumstances purely accidental, and completely opposed to any sentiment hostile to the Roman Church.

4. The Picts and Scots received the light of the gospel originally from Rome, and not from Britain. They already occupied at that period the ground which a school of learned men believe them only to have attained at a later date.

SECOND ARTICLE.

1. The differences between Rome and Britain were less *numerous*, less *important*, and, above all, of *later date* than the recent writers represent.

2. They indicate no relation between Britain and Asia.

3. They prove nothing against Rome: of the three nations which composed the British Church, *two* had from the first adopted the Roman usages.

4. As to the *six* controverted customs,

Three had their origin in a national, and not at all in an Asiatic feeling—to wit,

A. The *tonsure*—a national and even Druidic way of dressing the hair—that of the wise men, who are discussed in the lives of the Irish saints as opposing great obstacles to any modifications of the faith;

B. The national liturgy for the mass, such as existed in *all* the Churches evangelised by Rome, Gaul, Spain, &c.;

C. Aversion for the Roman clergy, repelled by patriotic sentiment, as apostles of the Saxon race;

And *three* in mistaken adhesion to the very doctrines of Rome:

D. The ceremonies supplementary to *baptism*, of which Bede speaks, ii. 2; but which the islanders would not recognise because their first apostles, who had come from Rome, had told them nothing about them;

E. The pascal *computation* (Easter), which the Britons maintained as they had received it at first from Rome without wishing to adopt the reform subsequently introduced by the Popes;

F. The celibacy of the clergy, as severely observed by the Britons as by the Roman clergy—only they accepted the double monasteries known in the East: and this is the only way in which any of the traditions of the East got a footing in the extreme West.

On the three principal points—1, The supremacy of Rome; 2, The celebration of Easter; 3, The marriage of the priests—the British Church in no way differs from other Western Churches,—at least, during the first five centuries. On the three secondary points—1, The tonsure; 2, The administration of baptism; 3, The liturgy—there were differences; but they were as great between Britain and the East as between Britain and Italy.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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